

DANTE STUDIES

with the Annual Report
of the Dante Society



CXX

2002

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Edited by
CHRISTOPHER KLEINHENZ

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Editor's Foreword

On the occasion of this final issue under my editorship, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Editorial Board who have given me their generous support and wise counsel over the past fifteen years. Their fine service and selfless dedication to the journal, now in its one hundred and twentieth year, are much appreciated, as is their continuing commitment of time and intellectual energy to our common scholarly enterprise. I also thank all our contributors and readers: it is for you and for subsequent generations of scholars and lovers of Dante that we gladly perform our labors. The new Editor of *Dante Studies*, Steven Botterill of the University of California-Berkeley, is in the process of completing the next issue, and we know that he will provide a judicious and steady hand at the helm, as the journal and the Dante Society each enter upon a new phase of existence. I am confident that *Dante Studies* will continue to publish the very best scholarship on Dante and his works and to record the impact and influence that they have had on readers and critics over the centuries. The journal has withstood the test of time and continues to provide a venue for the most recent and important critical scholarship on the works of the Florentine poet, who will never “perder viver tra coloro / che questo tempo chiameranno antico” (*Par.* 17:119f).

C. K.

Madison, Wisconsin

September, 2004

Dante's Forese, the Book of Job, and the Office of the Dead: A Note on *Purgatorio* 23

RONALD L. MARTINEZ

Dante's encounter with Forese Donati among the gluttons of Purgatory has been recognized by readers as one of the most intense and enigmatic encounters of the *Commedia*.¹ A historical figure at once Dante's close friend, neighbor, and kinsman by marriage, Forese is the one figure in the *Commedia* whom the poet claims to have personally mourned, with the possible exception of Brunetto Latini.² When the pilgrim meets his former friend in Purgatory, the sight of Forese's face, ravaged by the dieting imposed on the gluttons, precipitates a recrudescence of the pilgrim's original grief:³

“La faccia tua, ch'io lagrimai già morta,
mi dà di pianger mo non minor doglia,”
rispos'io a lui, “veggendola sì torta.”

(*Purg.* 23.55–57)

Given what we know about Florentine funeral practices in the late Duecento and early Trecento,⁴ the text suggests that Dante was among the intimate circle who attended Forese's deathbed and exequies.⁵ A measure of the intensity of the pilgrim's feelings for Forese is provided by comparison with the strongest representation of grief in the balance of Dante's work: his account of mourning for Beatrice in the later chapters of the *Vita nova*.⁶ The text of Canto 23 itself suggests the comparison, where the pilgrim refers to the time elapsed since Forese's death, or rather when he

“changed worlds”—“ . . . da quel dì / nel qual mutasti mondo a miglior vita / cinq’anni non son volti . . . ” (23.76–78)—, just as the poet will later have Beatrice refer to her death as “mutai vita” (30.125), and mark the time since her death as ten, that is twice five, years, “la decenne sete”(32.2). According to Boccaccio’s *Trattatello*, Dante’s mourning for Beatrice was regarded by his family and contemporaries as excessive,⁷ and the *Vita nova* gives support to this judgment, especially “Li occhi dolenti,” the canzone of mourning where the poet acknowledges being shunned because of his shameless public lamentation.⁸ In fact, a suggestive verbal parallel links the appearance Dante imputes to himself when mourning Beatrice in “Li occhi dolenti” (v. 68, “la mia labbia tramortita”) with the appearance of the emaciated gluttons, described as “cose rimorte” (*Purg.* 24.4), and thus with the “cangiata labbia” of Forese himself (23.47).⁹

It is the claim of this essay that in the context of other passages of the *Purgatorio* regarding the importance of caring for the dead and mourning for loved ones, the pilgrim’s memory of grieving for Forese testifies to the poet-pilgrim’s own participation in offices of piety for the dead as they were practiced in late medieval Florence.¹⁰ In this funereal and memorial context, Dante’s language concerning both Forese’s death and the purgatorial circumstances of the gluttons are informed by the text of the biblical book of Job, both as that book was understood in the history of its medieval exegesis and as it was used liturgically in the medieval Office of the Dead.

In the *Purgatorio*, Forese’s ravaged features initially prevent the pilgrim from recognizing him, so that Forese must speak in order to be identified. But as the lines quoted above indicate, the point of Dante’s remarks is that, when stripped of excess flesh, the shade of Forese resembles his own corpse: his appearance as a dead body. His appearance must conform to that of the previously described dieting gluttons:

Ne li occhi era ciascuna oscura e cava,
palida ne la faccia, e tanto scema
che da l’ossa la pelle s’informava.

(*Purg.* 23.22–24)

The association of taut skin and wasted flesh is made not once but twice, the second time by Forese himself:

“Deh, non contendere a l’asciutta scabbia,
che mi scolora,” pregava, “la pelle,
né a difetto di carne ch’io abbia.”

(*Purg.* 23.49–51)

Commentators agree that the picture Dante gives of the dieting gluttons’ faces draws on the texts of Penitential Psalm 101.6, on Lamentations 3.4, 4.8 and 5.10, and also on Job 19.20.¹¹ The passage from Job 19.20 is as follows in the Vulgate:

Pelli meae, consumptis carnibus, adhaesit os meum,
Et derelicta sunt tantummodo labia circa dentes meos.

The emphases on skin and bone are common to many of the passages usually cited. However, the wasting of flesh, found only in the text of Job (*consumptis carnibus*), seems to inform Dante’s choice of the term *scema* in line 23 and the phrases “difetto di carne” (23.51) and “munta . . . per la dieta” (24.17–18).¹² The word for skin, *pellis*, found in Job 19.20 and Lam. 3.4 and 5.12, but not in Psalm 101, receives emphatic treatment in Dante’s text; its vernacular equivalent *pelle* first appears within verse 23.24, but is subsequently promoted to rhyme position at 23.50, where it assonates with the previous rhymes on *Forese*, *raccese*, and *palese*. The most important of the details specific to the text of Job is the emphasis on the shriveling of the lips around the mouth, for in Dante’s canto the gluttons are chastised at the site of ingestion (cf. 24.28: “per fame a vòto usar li denti”; 24.38–39: “ov’el sentia la piaga / de la giustizia che sì li pilucca”).¹³

Dante’s emphasis on the mouth may be connected to the fact that Job’s virtue is manifested through his refusal to curse God with his lips (Job 1.22): “non peccavit Iob labiis suis.”¹⁴ The Biblical text, in a famous passage, does have Job using his mouth to curse his birth and his life (3.1: “aperuit Iob os suum, et maledixit diei suo”), but medieval exegesis of this passage attributes this curse to Job’s chastisement of his mortality: that is, to the kind of penitential recitation performed by the gluttons.¹⁵ Indeed, the words of Job’s imprecation are virtually reversed by the gluttonous souls’ recitation (in metrically altered form) of the common introit “Domine, labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam,” taken from Psalm 50, one of the seven penitential psalms.

Several other details in Dante's account of the dieting gluttons—the metaphor presenting diminished flesh as stripped of leaves (*sfoglia*, 23.58), the dried appearance of the skin (*fatto secco*, 23.26; *asciutta scabbia*, 26.49)—also may reflect the text of the Book of Job (cf. 13.25: “*stipulam siccam*,” “*folium quod vento rapitur*”), although these details could have been furnished from other sources.¹⁶

Dante's adaptation of the language of Job to the interview with Forese is more than a matter of descriptive details, however. Larger themes of the canto, both explicit and implicit—the predicament of human mortality raised by the memory of Forese's death, understanding how God countenances human suffering in this life, including the suffering of Christ on the cross (vv. 74–75) and that of the besieged in Jerusalem (vv. 28–30), and the Christian hope of salvation and resurrection—all suggest the relevance to the text of Job as it was bequeathed to the Middle Ages through Gregory's influential glosses in the *Moralia*, which take up the task of justifying God's ways to man. For Gregory, and thus for virtually all subsequent treatment of the Book of Job, Job's name, taken to mean *dolens*, and his stoical acceptance of his suffering were treated as prophetic of the sorrows of Christ. In addition, Job 19.25–27 furnished what was for Christians perhaps the most important Old Testament witnesses for belief in the resurrection of the body, one that was to find its suitable place in the Roman Office for the Dead.¹⁷

The concern with human mortality and resurrection in Canto 23 may justify a claim for a striking influence of the text of Job on the graphic metaphor used for the gluttons in Dante's text. In the Book of Job the term *homo* is frequently used in the nominative singular to sententiously characterize the human condition.¹⁸ Job's famous lament, early in the book, all but begins with it, “*conceptus est homo*”(3.3); and it recurs throughout, as in 7.17 (“*Quid est homo, quia magnificas eum?*”), occasionally in the first verse of chapters (as in 7.1, and 14.1: “*Homo, natus de muliere, brevi vivens tempore . . .*”).¹⁹ Job is introduced as the “*vir . . . simplex, et rectus*,” a phrase that had been rendered in the old pre-Jerome *Vetus latina* as *verus homo*.²⁰ In Canto 23, in turn, Dante's portrait of the gluttons as displaying the word *OMO* in the bones of their faces because they are stripped of flesh (23.32–33) dramatizes the wasting and inanition of which Job complains: just as Job's suffering is interpreted by Christian exegesis as prophetic of the redemptive suffering of Christ, the penitential dieting of the gluttons discloses their mortal condition, but at the same

time exposes the stamp of their God-created humanity in their very skulls. For these reasons, it is significant that Job 19.20, the passage Dante draws upon to render the look of the gluttons' meager flesh, also proves to be central in the narrative unfolding of Job's suffering in the Book of Job itself.

At the outset of the book, Satan, the adversary who proposes and carries out the testing of Job, argues that the mere destruction of Job's family and chattels is an insufficient test of his piety; the physical devastation of his body will be required as well. Satan's prosecutorial brief includes all the important terms in Dante's account of the gluttons' faces in Cantos 23–24:

Cui respondens Satan, ait: *Pellem pro pelle*, et cuncta quae habet *homo* dabit pro anima sua; alioquin mitte manum tuam, et tange *os eius et carnem*; et tunc videbis quod in *faciem* benedicat tibi. (2.4–5)

The same group of terms appears at Job 10.10–11, where Job points to himself as the work of his creator.²¹ Finally, at Job 19.26 the same complex of terms recurs as part of the text Christians cited as a witness of the resurrection of the flesh: “*rursum circumdabor pelle mea, et in carne mea videbo Deum meum.*” Here the skin is once again the outer limit or container of the body (cf. *Purg.* 23.25, “*buccia strema*”), and the restored flesh testifies to the resurrection, as prescribed in the *Credo* and the Office of the Dead. Job's own itinerary from wasted body to hope in a restored flesh would seem to be implicit in Dante's canto in the antithesis he draws between the “*aspetto . . . conquiso*” [“ruined aspect”] of the souls (23.45), and the final goal of their penitential operations suggested in 23.66: “*in fame e'n sete qui si rifà santa.*”²² The juxtaposed hemistichs suggest how the privation named in the words under the first two metrical accents of the verse can be rewritten as a reacquisition of integrity—one that is marked poetically by the metrically jarring liveliness of contiguous accented syllables closing out the line.

In the context of the fears and hopes attending bodily death, perhaps the most suggestive argument for the importance of the text of Job to Dante's past and present mourning for Forese is that substantial extracts from Job books 7–20 form the core of the readings for the Nocturns of Matins in the medieval Roman Office of the Dead.²³ In fact, most of the passages mentioned above are among the extracts, including 7.17 (first

reading), 10.10–11 (second reading), 13.25 (fourth reading), 14.1 (fifth reading), and of course 19.20 and 25–27 (eighth reading).²⁴ So familiar did these extracts become in late medieval devotional and literary culture that taken together they were referred to as *pety Job*, “little Job.”²⁵ Thus when Dante uses the language of Job to represent Forese’s features—the features over which he wept—he marks his participation in the elaborate process of preparing, accompanying, praying for and remembering the dead (*cura gerenda pro mortuis*) in a context of reiterated invocation of the book of Job.²⁶ Indeed, the reader’s memory of these rituals is probably triggered in the canto by the very first action the pilgrim notes being performed by the gluttons, their recitation of the *Miserere* (*Labia mea aperies*, 50.16), one of the penitential psalms also chanted during the Office for the Dead, at Lauds.²⁷

Several aspects of the Office of the Dead are, moreover, especially relevant to Forese’s location in Purgatory: the promise of resurrection, which we saw is part of the text of Job 19.20–27, furnishes the theological response to the first of the readings of Job in the Matins Office (Job. 7.16–21) and is in turn read in its own right as the eighth and penultimate reading. The emphases identified above regarding the condition of man, *homo*, and on the corruptible physical body of skin, flesh, and bone, are substantially digested in the extracts for the Office as well.²⁸ Moreover, as Knud Ottosen points out, certain variants in the Office, as well as the addition to the Roman office, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, of a ninth reading, from Job 10.18–22, reflect the adaptation of the Office to an emphasis on the doctrine of Purgatory, which only came to be officially defined and promulgated as doctrine at the Council of Lyons in 1274, when Dante was nine years old.²⁹ Indeed, the use of the Office for All Souls’ Day comes to be specifically oriented to the care of the dead in the sense of advancing their progress through Purgatory, as liturgical writers from Peter Comestor to Durandus make clear.³⁰ In this way, the liturgical reading of Job and the consideration of the fate of the dead in Purgatory had become closely, perhaps inevitably, associated for the cultural context of the *Commedia*.

That Dante had a close familiarity with the Office of the Dead is certain: he surely heard it recited not only during the several funerals he reports as occurring in the *Vita nova* (for Beatrice’s companion; Beatrice’s father; and Beatrice herself), but also during the typical repetitions of the Office on the third, seventh, and thirtieth day after decease, and on their

respective anniversaries. He would also have heard it during its annual recitation for all the dead, on All Souls' Day, and might also have had access to the daily recitations habitual in monasteries.³¹ There is evidence, too, that the Office was sometimes recited during the last days or hours of the dying, when Dante was likely weeping for his friend.³² It is also during the Duecento that the text of the Office of the Dead begins to circulate more widely among privileged members of society in the form of privately owned Psalter-Hours and Books of Hours, where the Office of the Dead occupies the last or penultimate position in the order of devotions (often immediately after the Penitential psalms, which include Psalms 50 and 101, previously mentioned); such books were typically illustrated, and the sections on the Office of the Dead sometimes includes images of Job—such as the notorious image of him sitting on a dunghill, being lectured to by wife and his friends—as well as representations of the care of the dying and the dead.³³ Although in the late Duecento Books of Hours were not in any sense widespread in Italy, the close commercial relations of Florence with Flanders, France, and England, where such books were beginning to be widely distributed, makes it not unreasonable to suppose that Dante could have known examples.

Whatever the availability of Books of Hours to Dante, the rendition of his personal memory of mourning for Forese *in the terms of the text of Job* is precisely the intended consequence of the inclusion of the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours: to encourage the strong identification of lay readers—typically, from the nobility or wealthy urban bourgeoisie—with Job as a typical sufferer of human frailties who gives voice to the fear of death and corruption latent in the reader himself. Job's example is thus a powerful incitement to the exercise of "looking to the end": *meminere mortem, respicere finem*. Indeed, such reflection is also the intended effect of the Office itself, which casts the voice of Job not as that of Christ, as in exegesis, but rather *in persona morientis* or *defunctis*, as the spokesman for the dying or dead themselves (including the dead in Purgatory).³⁴ In the *Commedia*, this general case appears sharply inflected precisely through the intensely personal relation between Dante and Forese. Just as Dante in the *Vita nova* deduced Beatrice's mortality from his own, and so precipitated the delirium of chapter 23, Dante's representation of Forese's dead face in the language of the wasted body of Job suggests that his friend's death had stimulated both compassion for his friend and reflection on his own mortality.³⁵ This psychology also precisely reflects that of Augustine's jus-

tification of tombs and monuments, a psychology Dante had already recalled in the *Purgatorio* with his comparison of the sculptures of the terrace of pride to pavement tombs in medieval churches.³⁶ Given that the Office of the Dead was also sometimes recited while the dying lingered in life, the link between the Office and Dante's memory of Forese's wasted face might be not merely historically authentic, but the specific trace of an episode no less traumatic for being conventional and liturgically ritualized.³⁷

A number of less obvious points arise in considering the relevance of the medieval Job to the cantos of the gluttons.³⁸ Although the medieval reading of Job affirms the Christian hope of transcending mortality in resurrection, it also emphasizes the sense of the brevity of life, and the fear of imminent cessation and extinction of personality, doomed to disappear like smoke or shadow; as Besserman observes, the "Little Job" extracted for the Office gives voice to some of the most searching questions uttered by any Biblical character.³⁹ Job endures the bitterness of his suffering: the word *amaritudo* and related terms are frequent in the text, and Job 10.1—"loquar in amaritudine animae meae"—is retained in the second extract of the Office of the Dead. In this context, Dante's fictional encounter with the soul of the dead Forese (and, *a fortiori*, Dante's representation of his meeting with Beatrice later in the poem) should probably be viewed against the background of the mixed fear and hope offered in the text of Job as emphasized in the extracts. Although addressed to the pilgrim in the casual phraseology suited to a random encounter in the street or *piazza*, Forese's question in Canto 24: "Quando fia ch'io ti riveggia?" allows us to infer the author's own doubts regarding when he might gaze on Forese again.⁴⁰

In the context of such eschatological anxieties, Dante's invention of the episode of Forese, and indeed the related episode of Piccarda, Forese's sister, in the *Paradiso*, may also be seen as personal memorials for members of a family who were part of Dante's intimate circle in Florence. It is worth remarking that three members of the Donati, Dante's next-door neighbors, mentioned in Cantos 23–24—Corso destined for Hell (24.82–87), Forese in Purgatory, and Piccarda in Paradise (*Purg.* 24.10–15, *Par.* 3.49)—severally inhabit the three realms of Dante's fictional next world. The Forese cantos are thus perhaps an extreme instance—outstripped only by the Cacciaguida cantos in the *Paradiso*—of Dante's next world acquiring the demographic profile of a Florentine neighborhood. The

memorialization of the Donati supplants mention of Dante's nuclear family much as Cacciaguida and Aldighiero stand in for Dante's immediate father in *Paradiso* 15–17;⁴¹ and in this capacity remembering the Donati also stands in for the offices of familial *pietas* encouraged in Purgatory: that “rimembranza / che solo a’ pii dà de le calcagne” (*Purg.* 12.20–21).⁴² Here again, Dante's gesture of remembering his close neighbors may resonate with part of the eighth reading of the Office of the Dead, in which the speaker (Job, in the Bible; the deceased and by implication the reader, in the Office) wonders if anyone will ever write down his history:

Quis mihi tribuat ut scribantur sermones mei? quis mihi det ut exarentur in libro, stylo ferreo et plumbi lamina, vel celte sculpantur in silice? (Job 19.23–24).

In this sense the episode of Forese works both as a personal memorial and as a culturally visible *tombeau* of the Donati.⁴³

The received text of Job may also have played a part in Dante's *retractatio* of the abuse of Nella, wife of Forese. A significant proportion of readers accept that Dante's placement of praise for Nella in Forese's mouth in Canto 23 atones for the denigration of her in the exchange of sonnets attributed to Dante and Forese.⁴⁴ It is to Nella's care for Forese's soul, in the form of personal prayers and suffrages, and possibly masses paid for and alms given (including the Office of the Dead itself, usually paid for by the family of the deceased, and repeatable at any time as a private votive office), that Forese attributes his rapid promotion in Purgatory. The association of women with the care for the dead was customary and of long standing; indeed, it was the widow Flora's inquiry about the burial of her nephew in the basilica of St. Felix that led to the writing of Augustine's influential discussion of the question.⁴⁵ In Dante's canto, mention of Nella's violent, efficacious weeping (23.87: “pianger dirotto”) clearly parallels the pilgrim's own memory of weeping for the dead Forese (23.56: “mi dà di pianger mo non minor doglia”). The link between the two acts of grieving may suggest that Forese's death, and the poet's experience of mourning him, perhaps in physical proximity to Nella, precipitated the change of heart regarding his former literary misbehavior toward the widow.

Generally speaking, the Book of Job treats women harshly: Job's wife is grouped with the trio of false friends who tempt Job away from steadfastness. Gregory associated her in the *Moralia* with the life of the flesh,

and consequently her depiction in medieval exegesis and illustration verges on the demonic (in some images, she is paired with a demon as co-tempter).⁴⁶ At the same time, the text of Job dismisses as miserable the condition of “man born of woman.” In one of the passages that is among the strongest medieval statements of *miseria hominis* and *contemptus mundi* and that introduces what became the final, ninth reading of the Office of the Dead in the Roman use, Job asks why he was not drawn from the womb directly into the grave.⁴⁷ In Canto 23 of the *Purgatorio*, however, the role of Forese’s wife is presented in quite a different light. Given the earlier use of a metaphor of birth to describe the effect of hearing the gluttons’ laments (23.12: “tal che diletto e doglia parturìe”), and the poet’s strong affirmation of Nella’s role in hastening Forese’s spiritual rebirth, Dante’s description of Forese’s rapid upward movement might harbor a metaphor of parturition, based on the word *tratto* as a reference to drawing the newborn from the flank, or womb: “[Nella] tratto m’ha de la costa ove si aspetta” (23.89).⁴⁸ But it is another passage in Canto 23 that seems more precisely targeted to Nella in light of Gregory’s observation, at the very beginning of his commentary, that in referring to Job as a good man among a bad people, the text renders him the supreme vote of praise: “ita immensa est praeconii, bonum etiam inter malos exstitisse” (*PL* 75.529).⁴⁹ This resonates with Forese’s praise of his wife:

“Tanto è a Dio più cara e più diletta
la vedovella mia, che molto amai,
quanto in bene operar è più soletta.”
(*Purg.* 23.91–93)

At the same time, Nella’s weeping extends, and possibly also in part disguises, the historical Dante’s own grief, supplications, and suffrages: it may be implicit that the mourning practices of the historical Dante also played the midwife in Forese’s rapid ascent as Dante has conceived it.

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NOTES

1. The question of the personal relations of Dante and Forese is usually discussed in conjunction with the *tenzone* attributed to Dante and Forese (or sometimes to Dante alone, or to neither). For a

discussion of the *tenzone*, see Additional Note 10: "Dante and Forese" by Robert M. Durling, in *Purgatorio*, ed. and tr. Robert M. Durling; Introduction and Notes by Ronald L. Martinez and Robert M. Durling (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003): 612–14. See also *The Dante Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Lansing (New York: Garland, 2000) under *Forese*; see also note 42.

2. *Inferno* 16.79–88, esp. lines 82–84, closely parallel the scene with Forese in their reference to Brunetto's facial appearance (his face is burned rather than merely appearing so), the comparison of past and present moments, and the expressions of heartfelt sorrow (*m'accora*). Brunetto died in 1294, Forese in 1296. The two meetings are closely related, as readers have long observed (cf. Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*, ed. Anna Maria Chiavacci-Leonardi [Milano: Mondadori, 1994]: 681); for an extensive comparison of the two passages, and a discussion of the question of Dante and Forese's relation as homoerotic, see Additional Note 10: "Dante and Forese" in the Durling-Martinez *Purgatorio*.

3. For the text see the Durling-Martinez *Purgatorio*. Dante's temporal indication of his weeping, "lagrimai già morta" is meant to contrast with the present circumstance in Purgatory (*mo*) and does not imply that Dante wept over Forese only *after* his death.

4. Boccaccio's introduction to the *Decameron* (ed. Vittore Branca [Milano: Mondadori, 1976]: pp. 15–16) gives an account of death and burial rituals in Florence before the plague of 1348, reflecting practices within a few decades of Dante's own death in 1321. Durandus' somewhat earlier account (c. 1285) of the *Officio mortuorum* in his *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (Napoli: Dura, 1859): VII.35 (pp. 700–08), supplements what Boccaccio describes. In Boccaccio's account, female mourners and close family begin the mourning within the house (a subsequent passage suggests female mourners also surround the dying person), while other mourners, including friends (*prossimi*), neighbors, and fellow citizens, congregate outside the door of the house; this retinue accompanies the body to the Church, the body borne on the shoulders of the dying person's friends and peers. In the case of a well-financed bourgeois or noble ritual, the Office of the Dead is then chanted (a full Office would include Vespers, known by its introit as *Placebo*, Matins, known by its introit of *Dirige*, and Lauds; the last two ceremonies taking place during the night). On the following day the Mass for the Dead would be sung, and subsequently the body would be transferred in its coffin to the graveyard, where it would be removed from the coffin and placed in the tomb or grave; at graveside the burial service would be chanted. Normally the body would have been unclothed just after death, when it was washed, and just before it is sewn into the graveclothes immediately before burial; but the pathetic nudity of the dead is a penitential theme and so influences especially visual representations.

5. In *Vita nova* 13.3 (ed. Guglielmo Gorni [Torino: Einaudi, 1996]: 117), describing the death of Beatrice's father, Dante suggests that both men and women congregated (though separately) to weep over the dead, the former at the entrance and the latter within the house: "... donne con donne e uomini con uomini s'adun[a]no a cotale tristizia, molte donne s'adunaro colà dove questa Beatrice piangea pietosamente." Later in the *libello*, in the prose preceding the *canzone* "Donna pietosa" (*Vita nova* 14.10), the author imagines he witnesses the preparation of Beatrice's dead body ("e quando io avea veduto compiere tutti li dolorosi mistieri che alle corpora de' morti s'usano di fare ..."); if *tutti* is taken at face value this *immaginazione* might imply a view of Beatrice's naked corpse (Gorni suggests rather "nudi e involti" in his note, p. 128, as in the first dream, but this may be excessive delicacy given that washing is involved). As the laying out of dead bodies was typically done by women (as indicated earlier in Dante's delirium; see note 6), Dante's fantasy here is transgressive in any case. In the case of Forese, Dante's pointing out that he wept over Forese's face may suggest he was present at Forese's deathbed, only possible if he had been an intimate.

6. See *Vita nova*, Chapters 18–23. The death of Beatrice, who died June 8, 1290, is the centerpiece and mainspring of the *Vita nova*, in many ways an extended *planctus*, or plaint, inspired by her passing; for this aspect of the work, see Nancy J. Vickers, "Widowed Words: Dante, Petrarch, and the Metaphors of Mourning," in *Discourses of Authority in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, ed. Kevin Brownlee and Walter Stephens (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1989): 97–108, and Ronald L. Martinez, "Mourning Beatrice: the Rhetoric of Lamentations in the *Vita nuova*," *MLN* 115 (1998): 1–29. Just as Dante emphasizes Forese's face in Canto 23 of the *Purgatorio*, it is Beatrice's face that is the focus of Dante's delirious vision of her in *Vita nova*, Chapter 14: "e fue

si forte la erronea fantasia, che mi mostrò questa donna morta. E pareami che donne la covrissero, cioè la sua testa, con uno bianco velo; e pareami che la sua faccia avesse tanto aspetto d'umiltade, che pareva che dicesse: 'Io sono a vedere lo Principio della pace'" (14.8). The words *testa* and *faccia* appear only in the subsequently redacted prose, written, it is generally held, c. 1293–94, not very long before Forese's death in July of 1296.

7. See the *Trattatello in Laude di Dante*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci (Milano: Mondadori 1975): la redazione, par. 39–45, esp. 40 and 43. According to Boccaccio, Dante's family arranged his marriage with Gemma Donati, in order to assist in his recovery from grief; as a neighbor and friend of Dante and kinsman (though distant) of Gemma, Forese might have been involved in such an arrangement. But Boccaccio is not reliable here; Dante had been betrothed to Gemma when only twelve, in 1277; the marriage was not a new idea (and Dante's cohabitation with Gemma began in 1285 (see *DE*: 16).

8. See "Li occhi dolenti" vv. 65–68 (*Vita nova*, Ch. 20): "si mi fa travagliar l'acerba vita; / la quale è sì 'invilita, / che ogn'om par che mi dica: 'Io t'abbandono,' / veggendo la mia labbia tramortita."

9. The words involved are rare: *rimorto* is a hapax in Dante's work, while *tramortire* appears three times, all in the *Vita nuova* (see also *Vita nova* 8.5: "Lo viso mostra lo color del core, / che tramortendo ovunque pò s'appoia"; and 28.10: "ch'Amor vi tramortisce, sì lien dole"). Dante's description of Forese as a "cangiata labbia" (23.47) is the sole use in the *Purgatorio* of *labbia* for the face and appearance; it is used on two other occasions in the *Vita nova*, once for Beatrice (17.7) and once again for the mourning Dante (25.4).

10. The importance of prayers by survivors, which permit souls in Purgatory to advance more quickly toward Paradise, is a leading theme of the *cantica*; see note 45 below. For a modern discussion of suffrages in relation to Purgatory, see Jacques le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, tr. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

11. The appearance of the gluttons is also of course influenced by Ovid's representation of personified hunger (*Fames*) in the *Metamorphoses*, as has long been observed. For the references to the Psalms and Job see, among others, Mario Marti, "Il passato al filtro del presente (*Purg. XXIII*)," in *Studi su Dante* (Galatina: Congedo, 1984): 135–52, and the Durling-Martinez *Purgatorio*. See also William A. Stephany, "Erysichthon and the Poetics of the Spirit," in *The Poetry of Allusion: Virgil and Ovid in Dante's "Commedia,"* ed. Rachel Jacoff and Jeffrey T. Schnapp (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991): 173–80. For the importance of the references to Lamentations 3.4, 4.10 and 5.8, closely linked to the mention of Maria of Eleazar in Jerusalem at vv. 28–30, see Martinez, "Lament and Lamentations in *Purgatorio* and the Case of Dante's Statius," *Dante Studies* 115 (1997): 45–88, esp. 62–66. Lamentations itself is closely related to Job in the exegetical tradition, not only because of parallel passages (e.g., Lam. 5.12 and Job 19.9; Lam. 5.12 and Job 30.29, etc.), but because Gregory's *Moralia in Job* was a model for the important Carolingian commentaries on Lamentations. See E. Ann Matter, "The Lamentations Commentaries of Hrabanus Maurus and Paschasius Radbertus," *Traditio* 38 (1982): 137–63.

12. This phrase, with its metaphor from milking, echoes yet another passage from the Book of Job (10.10–11), where the context is the fashioning of the human body by God: "Nonne sicut lac mulisti me, Et sicut caesum compegisti me? Pelle et carnibus vestisti me; ossibus et nervis compegisti me." See note 21.

13. For implications of the co-location of ingestion and speech in the canto of the gluttons, see Richard Abrams, "Inspiration and Gluttony: The Moral Context of Dante's Poetics of the Sweet New Style," *MLN* 91 (1976): 30–59; see also Christopher Kleinhenz, "Food for Thought: *Purgatorio* XXII, 146–147," *Dante Studies* 95 (1977): 69–79.

14. Dante perhaps puns on *labbia*, meaning visage or appearance, and Lat. *labia*, for the lips (just as the Latin text seems to pun on the proximity of the terms *os*, *oris* (mouth) and *os*, *ossa* (bone); see note 9.

15. See Gregory, *Moralia in Job* IV.1 (*PL* 75. 637–41). Gregory summarizes: "Vir ergo sanctus in dolore proprio causam totius humani generis deflens, et nihil speciale omni modo in speciali vulnere cogitans, reducat ad animum originem culpae; et consideratione justitiae, dolorem temperet poenae."

16. Two of the passages in Lamentations refer to a dried or burned appearance of the famished; this aspect is less conspicuous in the text of Job.

17. For discussion of the influence of the *Moralia*, see Lawrence L. Besserman, *The Legend of Job in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979), and Ann Astell, *Job, Boethius, and Epic Truth* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994). Gregory's commentary strongly influenced subsequent commentaries on Job, including that of Rupert of Deutz; Aquinas' literal exposition explicitly takes Gregory's "mystical" glosses for granted. Peter of Blois' *Compendium in Job*, later translated into Old French (*L'hystoire Job*, ed. Robert Chapman Bates [New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1937]), was conceived in part as an abridgement of Gregory; Peter of Riga's versified version of the Book of Job (*Aurora Petri Rigae Biblia Versificata*, 2 vols., ed. Paul E. Beichner [Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1965]: 669–702) follows Gregory's identification of Job with Christ. For the use of Job in the thirteenth-century Office of the Dead, see also Durandus, *Rationale*, VII.35.33, and Knud Ottosen, *Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993): 53–90.

18. *Homo* is used in the Book of Job 26 times in the nominative singular; 68 times in all. Compare with the longer books of Genesis (13 nom. sing. uses), Isaiah (9), and Jeremiah (14); but the brief, sententious, "philosophical" Ecclesiastes counts 21 nominative singular and 47 total uses.

19. The *incipit* of the lament (3.1) is emphasized in many commentaries because, according to a tradition beginning with Origen and Jerome, it is at this point that the book begins to be written in "hexameter" verse; see James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (New Haven, Connecticut, and London: Yale University Press, 1981): 135–70 for discussion of medieval ideas of the metrical passages in the Bible.

20. See Astell, *Job*, 70, regarding Job 1.1 ("et erat ille homo verus") in the *Vetus Latina*. The phrase occurs hundreds of times in the *Patrologia* to describe Christ as truly man; see for example Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium* (PL 35.1453).

21. See Job 10.11, cited in note 12. The passage, one of the extracts for the Office of the Dead, is further linked to the Forese cantos and their sequel through Dante's comparison of the human embryo to coagulate milk (*coagulando*) at *Purg.* 25.50, and perhaps through his assertion of being in the articulated body at 26.57: "col sangue suo e con le sue giunture."

22. PL 75.1074: "Job christum redemptorem aperte praenuntiavit"; 75.1075: "Christus . . . resurrexit." At PL 75.1077: "rursum circumdabor," Gregory cites Luke 24, 39, "palpate et videte." And see PL 75.1080: "reducendum carnem in integrum statum credidit Job. Ecce resurrectionem, ecce pellem, ecce carnem apertis fatetur vocibus." The association goes back to Origen and Jerome (PL 23, 392–99). See Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995): 88; also, for the later Middle Ages, see Bynum, *Resurrection*, 134–35, citing an anonymous *Summa*; she cites Aquinas on the same passage in *Exp. in Job*, Chap. 19, lectio 2 (*Opera omnia*, vol. 18, ed. Freté [Vives, 1876]) at 234 n.17 and 258.

23. In addition to the Office of the Dead, the text of Job was read liturgically during the first two weeks of September during Ordinary Time; see the Breviary and Missal of Haymo of Faversham, edited by S. J. P. van Dijk (*The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy: The Liturgy of the Papal Court and the Franciscan Order in the Thirteenth Century* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984]: 2, 111). One of the verses read, after the responsory from Job 30.31 ("Versa est in luctus cythara mea"), is Job 7.5: "cutis mea aruit, et contracta est." Several other verses and responsories are found among the alternative readings documented by Ottosen for the Office of the Dead (see *Responsories*, 61–63).

24. With the exception of essays on Dante's use of Psalm 113 and Psalm 50, study of Dante's use of the liturgy is still in its infancy. For a useful survey of the problem and its possibilities, and valuable bibliography, see John C. Barnes, "Vestiges of the Liturgy in Dante's Verse," in *Dante and the Middle Ages: Literary and Historical Essays*, ed. John C. Barnes and Cormac "Cuilleánáin" (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995): 231–69. Recent more specialized studies include Erminia Ardisino, "I Canti liturgici nel Purgatorio dantesco," *Dante Studies* 108 (1990): 39–65, and Andrew McCracken, "In Omnibus Viis Tuis: Compline in the Valley of the Rulers (*Purg.* VII–VIII)," *Dante Studies* 111 (1993), 119–129.

25. See Besserman, *Legend*, 59.

26. Augustine's influential treatise on caring for the dead is at *PL* 40.591–610; for its dissemination in the Middle Ages see Michel Lauwers, *La mémoire des ancêtres, le souci des morts: morts, rites, et société au Moyen Age* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997): 67–100, 425–56. For funeral laments in the Greco-Roman and medieval Italian world, see also Ernesto de Martino, *Morte e pianto rituale. Dal lamento funebre antico al pianto di Maria* (Torino: Einaudi, 1983; 1958').

27. Information on the liturgy at the end of the Duecento is taken from Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, from the Ordinals and Missal of Haymo of Favesham, and from the *Liber Usualis* (Tournai: Desclee, 1938). Although the *Liber* reflects post-Tridentine use, the Roman Office of the Dead, itself one of the oldest offices, was remarkably conservative over the centuries; see John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991): 105). A full census of responses and versicles to the medieval Office of the Dead is available in Ottosen, *Responsories*.

28. Thus we find *homo* in the first reading (7.17: "quis est homo . . ."), in the second (10.4: "sicut vidit homo"; also 10.5: "dies hominis"), and in the fifth (14.1: "homo, natus de mulier"; also 14.5: "brevis dies hominis"), while the sixth reading puts the question of the possibility of resurrection itself (14.14: "putasne, mortuus homo rursum vivat?"). The word *pellis* (along with *carnis* and *ossum*) is in the third reading as well as the eighth, and other words related to mortal existence—*putredo*, *semen*, *vulva*—are found in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and ninth readings, respectively.

29. See Ottosen, *Responsories*: 62–63. On pages 42–49, Ottosen discusses the evolving relation between of the Office for the Dead and the increasing importance in the thirteenth century of the doctrine of Purgatory. See also Durandus, *Rationale* VII.35.20–21.

30. See Peter Comestor, *PL* 171.741 (cited in Ottosen, 47), and Durandus, *Rationale*, VII.35.1: "Sane, hoc officium continuatur festo omnium sanctorum, et sunt his dies continui tribus mysteriis deputati. Nam vigilia omnium sanctorum dies est afflictionis; solemnitas dies exultationis; hodie vero dies orationis. In primo nos jejunando affligimus, praesentis vitae miseriam recolentes. In secundo beatitudini sanctorum congaudemus, gratiarum actiones Dominum referentes. In tertio pro his, quae in purgatorio detinentur oramus, eis modo poenam minorem, modo plenam absolutionem orationibus impetrantes."

31. For the relation of funeral and commemorative uses, see Ottosen, *Responsories* 44; Besserman, *Legend*: 64. As a Votive Office, the Office of the Dead could also be recited daily (Harper, *Forms and Orders*, 105); for monastic uses, see Ottosen 3, 44. Barnes ("Vestiges," 253) notes that Dante, though not a monk, was evidently familiar with the Office and with monastic uses and habits generally, although this is probably not nearly so surprising as Barnes makes it out to be. Is it likely that Dante would have been ignorant of the life of one of the principal orders of medieval society and of the chief forms of their worship?

32. See Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope's Body*, tr. David Peterson (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 115. For (fourteenth- and fifteenth-century) illustrations in Books of Hours of the Office being read to the dying, see Roger S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1997): 120–21. Ottosen (*Responsories*, 53) observes that the original context for the reading of the Job extracts was the liturgy at the deathbed.

33. See Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, and by the same author, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: George Braziller, in association with the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, 1988). In Claire Donovan's study of the de Brailles Hours, four of eight thirteenth-century English Books of Hours include the Office of the Dead (three in the Sarum use); see *The de Brailles Hours: Shaping the Book of Hours in Thirteenth-Century Oxford* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991): 183–200. For the use of such books by readers, and their place in the development of private reading and devotions, see Paul Saenger, "Books of Hours and Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages," in *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Roger Chartier (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989): 141–73. Dante's private meditation on Beatrice's greeting in the *Vita nuova* (3.2) may well reflect habits of private devotion among Florentines in the late Duecento.

34. See Ottosen, *Responsories*, 43–44 and 53–54.

35. For this aspect with regard to the future death of Beatrice in the *Vita nuova*, see Martinez, "Mourning Beatrice," 21–22.

36. Dante discusses the function of tombs in *Purg.* 12.16–21: "Come, perché di lor memoria sia, / sovra i sepolti le tombe terragne / portan segnato quel ch'elli eran pria, / onde li molte volte si ripiagne / per la puntura de la rimembranza, / che solo a' pii dà de le calcagne." This follows closely Augustine's *de cura*: "Sed non ob aliud vel memoriae vel monumenta dicuntur ea quae insignita fiunt sepulcra mortuorum, nisi quia eos qui viventium oculis morte subtracti sunt, ne oblivione etiam cordis subtrahantur, in memoriam revocant, et admonendo faciunt cogitari: nam et Memoriae nomen id apertissime ostendit, et monumentum eo quod moneat mentem, id est, admoneat, nuncupatur" (*PL* 40.596). Durandus cites Augustine when discussing the Office of the Dead; see *Rationale* VII.35.26, 36.

37. Augustine himself had encountered the sorrow of human mortality when he lost a friend of his youth to a wasting fever (plausibly a similar malady struck down Forese, as he died in July, when malaria was common in parts of Tuscany); see *Confessions* IV.4–6.

38. There is the possibility that Gregory's gloss on the feasting (which proves fatal) of Job's children as having entailed excesses of gluttony may have been a stimulus for Dante's association of the gluttons with the text of Job; see *PL* 75.568–69: "convivia peragi sine culpa vix possunt . . ."; ". . . Absit autem ne tanti viri filios per convivorum studio ingurgitando ventri vacasse suspicemur. . . ." On another level, the stimulus may have come from the correlation between the anxiety over death and the fear of being eaten; see Bynum, *Resurrection*, esp 27, 39, 101–04.

39. See Besserman, *Legend of Job*, 63–64.

40. A verse like 14.12 is characteristic: "sic homo, cum dormierit, non resurget . . ."; the whole of Job Chapter 14, which furnishes two extracts for the Office of the Dead (14.1–6, 13–16), is relevant.

41. In the case of Corso, of course, the memorial is not flattering: indeed, the account of Corso dragged off to Hell (*Purg.* 24.82–87) is probably an example, in words, of the defamatory portrait, *pittura infamante*, as described in Samuel Y. Edgerton, *Pictures and Punishment: Art and Criminal Prosecution during the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca, New York, and London: Cornell University Press, 1985): 59–90. This genre flourished in the Duecento even though no examples survive (see Edgerton, 74). The defamatory portrait of Corso sets off the laudatory portrait of Piccarda and the compassionate portrait of Forese.

42. Dante's wife Gemma is never explicitly mentioned in his works, nor are his daughter or sons, nor his half-brother Francesco; but it is possible that his sons' names are veiled in the names of his interrogators (Saints Peter, James, and John) in the heaven of Gemini, *Par.* 24–26.

43. As the case of the Donati apparently occupied nearly the entire north side of Via San Martino from the Piazzuola di San Martino del Vescovo (now Piazza dei Cimatori) to Via Santa Margherita, excluding only the case of the Alighieri and Mardoli (see the street layout reconstructed in Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance* [New Haven, Connecticut, and London: Yale University Press, 2000]: 46), Dante's memorial is both intimate and spatially circumscribed.

44. See Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*, ed. Chiavacci-Leonardi, notes to Canto 23: pp. 684–85. This view of course grants the authenticity of the sonnet exchange; for a recent *mise au point* and a critique of accounts that deny authenticity, see Fabian Alfie, "For Want of a Nail: The Guerri-Lanza-Cursiotti Argument Regarding the *Tenzzone*," *Dante Studies* 116 (1998): 141–59.

45. See Lauwers, *La mémoire*, 425–46. In Dante's Purgatory, the assistance of suffrages is represented as expected of women (cf. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, pp. 15–16), although in fact only Nella, the wife of Forese, is said to do her full duty. Thus, at *Purg.* 3.115, Manfred's daughter Costanza still needs to be told that her father is saved; at *Purg.* 5.90 Buonconte's wife Giovanna has taken no measures to help him; at *Purg.* 8.71 judge Nino wants his wife Giovanna to pray for him, but she has remarried; at *Purg.* 19.142, Pope Adrian has expectations of his niece Alagia, but fears her natural goodness will be influenced by the wicked relatives that surround her. Of three widows, a niece, and a daughter, only one of the widows had been effective in speeding up the ascent of the mountain of a husband, uncle, or father. Of course, the unperformed suffrages justify the petitions made of the pilgrim, and thus help to motivate his journey.

46. For Job's wife in medieval exegesis, see Besserman, *Legend of Job*, 35–48 and 92–93, 99–106; the antifeminist traditions go back at least to Augustine and beyond; see Samuel Terrien, *The Iconography of Job through the Centuries* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996): 55–56. In the the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, Job's sufferings are figurally related to the scourging and mocking of Christ: see Adrian Wilson and Joyce L. Wilson, *A Medieval Mirror: Speculum humanae salvationis 1324–1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984): 181, 204. Nevertheless, Gregory's gloss to Job 19.20, repeated by most subsequent commentators, identifies the flesh that remains adhering to the bones as the faithful women who did not abandon Christ when he was arrested (*Moralia*, PL 75.1068).

47. See Job 10.18–19, following the reading of Job 19.20–27; for these readings, see Ottosen, 62–63. See also Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 166–167; AH 105–107. For remarkable illustrations of this verse in manuscripts of the mid and late fourteenth century, see Michael Camille, *Master of Death: The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Univ. Press, 1996), esp. 59–67. For a discussion of Job iconography, see Terrien, *Iconography*, passim.

48. That is, “she has drawn me from the flank [or the rib] where one waits”; phrasing consistent with similar metaphors both earlier and later in the poem (e.g., *Purg.* 20.19–21; 24.49–50). Dante frequently uses *costa* to mean “flank” or “side” (*Inf.* 10.75, 17.14, 27.32, *Purg.* 29.68, etc.); *costa* is even linked with *grembo* at *Purg.* 7.68 (“dove la costa fa di sé grembo”). Terrien (*Iconography*, 77–79) suggests a sympathetic portrayal of Job's wife in the Chartres portal in the North Transept: a scant harvest.

49. Dante draws a similar contrast between the goodness of Alagia Fieschi, the niece of Pope Hadrian V, and her surroundings at *Purg.* 19.142. The extension of Gregory's praise to Nella is rendered more plausible by Gregory's subsequent comparison (*Moralia* I. i; PL 75.529) of Job's virtue among a bad people to Canticles 2.2: “sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias.”

Vitruvius and Dante's Giants

RICHARD KAY

Size is the distinguishing characteristic of giants, and Dante accordingly stresses this feature when, in *Inferno* 31, he describes the ones he encountered half immersed in rock at the top of the cliff that separates the circles of simple and complex fraud. The poet does not, however, plainly state how high these giants are; instead, he provides a variety of precise details which should enable the curious reader to calculate the giants' size. Thus Nimrod's head is as big as the huge bronze pine cone which still is displayed at Saint Peter's in Rome; moreover, the distance from his navel to his shoulders is thirty hands (*gran palmi*, or spans), which, Dante says, is farther than three tall Frisians can reach (*Inf.* 31:58–66). Ephialtes is “bigger” than Nimrod (84), as is Briareus (104), while Tityus and Typhon are comparable in size with Antaeus (124), who from chin to navel measures five ells (*alle*, 113). The height of the giants is not just a matter of idle or pedantic curiosity, however, for when the reader reaches the towering figure of Lucifer, he learns that he needs to know how high the giants are in order to compute the size of Lucifer (*Inf.* 34:30–33).

Despite the apparent precision of these indications, Dante's commentators differ widely in their calculations of the giants' height, with estimates ranging all the way from 50 to 100 feet,¹ while many others doubt that any consistent solution can be derived from Dante's data.² One reason for these inconsistencies is that there was no single standard for the units of measurement that Dante specified; instead, each Italian commune or region had its local standard. For example, the *palmo* varied from 0.1250 m at Rome to 0.2918 m at Florence, with eighteen other values between these extremes.³ The disparity is even greater when Italian equivalents are

sought for foreign measures. Thus the commentators identify the *alla*, or ell, as a unit used in England, or France, or Flanders, or Brabant, and, still worse, they give a half dozen values for it in terms of Florentine *braccia* and/or *canne*.⁴ Strange to say, no modern commentator has attempted to clarify, or even to control, these disparate figures by referring to the meticulous metrological tables compiled by Ronald Zupko for Italy, France, and England.⁵

The other reason that the results have been less than satisfactory is that in making the calculations, human proportions have not been taken into account. Undoubtedly they should be, since we are advised at the outset that Nimrod's "other bones were in proportion" to his face—*e a sua proporzione eran l'altre ossa* (*Inf.* 31:60). That this fact is relevant to the calculations is finally made explicit when we are told that the pilgrim compares better in size to a giant than giants do with Lucifer's arms—*e più con un gigante io mi convegno, / che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia* (*Inf.* 34:30–31). To be sure, the importance of proportionality has been recognized in calculating Lucifer's height,⁶ but this instance has not suggested that human proportions are also of relevance in calculating the height of the giants.

Commentators have had good reason not to invoke a canon of human proportions, because the only one applicable to Dante's data⁷ that was known in the Latin West during his lifetime was the list given by Vitruvius in his treatise *De architectura* 3.1.2.⁸ And until recently, no one supposed that Dante could have known this text, since its popularity in Italy certainly dates from the fifteenth century, when this product of Rome's Augustan Age became the criterion of Renaissance art and architecture. To be sure, Dante probably would have known the summary of the relevant passage that appears in Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum maius*,⁹ but in abridging the passage Vincent omitted the numbers on which any calculations would have to be based.¹⁰

But now it appears that Dante would not have had to rely on excerpts, because a recent census of Vitruvius manuscripts shows that the entire treatise was available in Italy during Dante's lifetime. Before the thirteenth century, although the *De architectura* had been copied in northern Europe since Carolingian times (20 extant manuscripts), its presence in Italy is first attested in a twelfth-century library catalog from Montecassino.¹¹ Thereafter, copies of Italian provenance become increasingly common, with five extant manuscripts from the thirteenth century and eight more

from the fourteenth.¹² A few of these can even be located close to Dante in time and place: for example, a Duecento copy from an unknown monastic library was acquired in Florence by the British Library (Schuler, no. 30);¹³ an early Trecento copy was in the library of San Salvatore, Bologna (no. 38), while another, dated 1319, belonged to the Visconti library in Pavia (no. 44).¹⁴ Furthermore, other copies, now lost, have left traces: for instance, Petrarch annotated an old copy, probably in Carolingian minuscule, which in turn was copied together with his notes (no. 43).¹⁵ The manuscript evidence therefore indicates that the relevant text of Vitruvius's canon was available in Dante's Italy.

Moreover, recent studies by art historians indicate that artists working in Tuscany during Dante's lifetime were using Vitruvius's doctrine of human proportions. Joel Brink has demonstrated that Cimabue used a Vitruvian principle to design the superstructure of the Santa Croce crucifix, and he argues that Vitruvius's geometrical principle of symmetry was employed not only by Cimabue but also by other Florentine and Sienese painters, including Duccio, Giotto, and Simone Martini.¹⁶ Furthermore, it appears that in the Arena Chapel, Giotto usually divided human heads into three equal parts in accordance with the proportions prescribed by Vitruvius, except in the case of Judas, whose head is intentionally distorted as he gives Jesus the betraying kiss.¹⁷ All these applications of Vitruvian principles, it should be noted, are *practical* and hence are not involved in the now discredited mystical interpretation of the Vitruvian man as a microcosm.¹⁸

Finally, we can be sure that Vitruvian proportions were known in Italian artistic circles from the testimony of Ristoro d'Arezzo, a friar and craftsman who himself practiced goldsmithing and illumination.¹⁹ In his treatise *La composizione del mondo* (1282), he describes the canon of human proportions currently used by "skilled designers—*li savi disegnatori*," which was based on a passage of the *De architectura*.²⁰ Although Ristoro does not cite Vitruvius, even the skeptical Frank Zöllner admits that Ristoro's informants knew the Vitruvian canon,²¹ and consequently we can be sure that it was known, at least to artists, in Dante's milieu and lifetime. Therefore it is entirely plausible that Dante himself knew the Vitruvian canon, either directly from the *De architectura* or indirectly from the artistic community.

These new resources and discoveries have encouraged me to attempt a

re-calculation of the dimensions of Dante's giants that is based on Zupko's metrology and Vitruvius's canon of human proportions.²²

1. Nimrod's face

(a) *Inf.* 31:58–59: “*La faccia sua mi pareva lunga e grossa / come la pina di San Pietro a Roma*—His face seemed to me as long and huge as the pine cone of St. Peter's at Rome.”²³

(b) The pine cone (*pina*) at Saint Peter's, Rome, is 3.56 meters in height.²⁴

(c) Therefore Nimrod's face is 3.56 meters high.

(d) According to Vitruvius, the human face is 1/10 of the total height of the body.²⁵

(e) Therefore Nimrod's total height is ten times that of his face:
 $3.56 \text{ m} \times 10 = 35.6 \text{ m}$ (116 feet, 10 inches).

2. Nimrod's visible half

(a) *Inf.* 31:65–66: “*però ch'i' ne vedea trenta gran palmi / dal loco in giù dov' omo affibbia 'l manto*—for I saw thirty great spans of him down from the place where a man buckles his cloak.”

(b) According to Zupko, the length of the span (*palmi*) varied greatly in Italy, ranging from 0.1250 m at Rome to 0.2918 m at Florence.²⁶

(c) Assuming that Dante's *gran palmi* were the maximum, Florentine measure, then $0.2918 \text{ m} \times 30 \text{ gran palmi} = 8.754 \text{ meters}$.

(d) Exactly half of Nimrod was buried in the stone bank: *Inf.* 31:61–64: “*la ripa, ch'era perizoma / dal mezzo in giù, ne mostrava ben tanto / di sopra . . .*—the bank, which was an apron to him from his middle downward showed us full so much of him above” that three Frisians could not touch his hair.

(e) According to Vitruvius, the navel is the midpoint of the human body.²⁷

(f) Moreover, also according to Vitruvius: “from the top of the breast with the bottom of the neck . . . to the crown, a fourth part.”²⁸ Dante, like Vitruvius, begins measuring at the pit of the throat, but from there measures down instead of up.

(g) The 30-span portion of Nimrod therefore is 1/4 of his total height,

or $1/2$ of his visible height, since from (f) it is known that the other half of his visible height is also $1/4$.

(h) It is the lower half of Nimrod's visible body, therefore, that is 30 spans high, or 8.754 meters (28 feet, 9 inches).

(i) Consequently, Nimrod's total height would be 35.02 meters (4×8.754 m).

(j) This does not agree with the figure arrived previously arrived at (§ 1.e) of 35.6 meters, but the discrepancy (58 cm) can be accounted for by understanding "*gran palmi*" (*Inf.* 31:65; above, § 2.a) to mean "*palmi* slightly larger than the Florentine *palmi*." Thus the discrepancy would be removed if each *gran palmo* were merely 5 mm larger than the standard: $0.005 \text{ m} + 0.2918 \text{ m} = 0.2968 \text{ m}$; $0.2968 \text{ m} \times 120 \text{ gran palmi}$ (Nimrod's total height; above, § 2.g) = 35.62 meters, practically the same as the height as previously calculated in § 1.e (35.6 m).

3. The three Frisians

(a) *Inf.* 31:63b–64: "*di giugnere a la chioma / tre Frison s'averien dato mal vanto*—three Frieslanders would have made ill vaunt to have reached to his hair."

(b) Next we must account for the inability of three Frisians to reach Nimrod's hair. Benvenuto explained that they were the biggest of the Germans, who generally are large;²⁹ somewhat later, he notes that, although it is commonly supposed that no man could be higher than Hercules, who was seven feet tall, nonetheless men twelve feet high have been reported in several instances.³⁰ Let us try both values.

(c) Presumably, for the purposes of measurement, the three Frisians are laid end to end, the highest one reaching for Nimrod's hair, so to their combined height one must add the length of one Frisian arm.

(d) A man's arm is $3/8$ of the height of his body. This figure is derived from Vitruvius's terse statement that "the breast [is] also a quarter [part of a man's height]—*pectus item quartae*" (*De arch.* 3.1.2). It is commonly understood that Vitruvius means the width of the breast,³¹ so that when a man stands with outstretched arms, his chest occupies $1/4$ of the distance from fingertip to fingertip; hence both arms together make up the remaining $3/4$ of the distance, and one arm is accordingly $3/8$ of the man's arm span. This value is confirmed by Vitruvius's univocal assertion that a

man's height is equal to the breadth of his outstretched arms.³² Therefore, the length of a single arm is $\frac{3}{8}$ of the total height from head to toe.

(e) A 7-foot Frisian would stand about 2.13 m high; so three would be 6.39 m high; and the additional arm's length ($2.13 \text{ m} \times \frac{3}{8} = 0.08 \text{ m}$) brings their total reach to 7.19 m (23 feet, 7 inches).³³

(f) On the other hand, a 12-foot Frisian would stand 3.66 m high; so three would be 10.98 m high; the additional arm's length ($3.66 \text{ m} \times \frac{3}{8} = 1.37 \text{ m}$) brings their total reach to 12.35 m (40 feet, 6 inches).

(g) The three Frisians, Dante says, would not be able to reach Nimrod's hair. Medieval illustrators of the scene were not sure how a giant wore his hair, but ten of them pictured it at shoulder length, while only four imagined it was shorter.³⁴

(h) Assuming that Nimrod's hair fell to his shoulders, the distance from his navel, at ground level, to his hair would be the same as the 30 *gran palmi*, which Dante says was the distance he saw "down from the place where a man buckles his cloak" (*Inf.* 31:66). If one *gran palmo* is 0.2968 (§ 2.j, above), then 30 of them are 8.9 m (29 feet, 2 1/2 inches), which would be the distance that the Frisians cannot reach.

(i) Evidently the three Frisians Dante had in mind were not 12-footers, because such could easily reach Nimrod's hair. But 7-foot Frisians, reaching only 7.19 m, would *not* be able to reach 8.9 m to touch his long hair, which would be 1.71 m above them. Since this agrees with the text (a), the lesser figure is the better one, although it is, of course, only approximate.

(j) The sense of the text, then, may be paraphrased thus: the distance from Nimrod's navel to his shoulders was more than the combined reach of three 7-foot Frisians (7.19 m), since it measured 8.9 m. The three Frisians are mentioned simply to give the reader an approximation of the height, which then is stated more precisely in *gran palmi*. Three Frisians were in fact the appropriate number, for with an additional 7-foot Frisian (2.13 m), a team of four would have more than made up the required distance.

4. Antaeus's head

(a) *Inf.* 31:113–114: "*e venimmo ad Anteo, che ben cinque alle, / sanza la testa, uscì fuor de la grotta*—and [we] came to Antaeus, who stood full five ells, not reckoning his head, above the rock."

(b) In calculating Antaeus's height, the principal problem is to determine the length of the *alla* that Dante had in mind. The *alla* is not an Italian measure,³⁵ as the commentators recognized by identifying it with measures used in England, France, Flanders, or Brabant. Commentators medieval and modern provide a variety of conversion equivalents, most of which yield a height for Antaeus that is either less than or the same as that of Nimrod (see note 4).

(c) These results cannot be correct because Antaeus must be taller than Nimrod. Dante explicitly states that one giant, Ephialtes, is "*assai più fero e maggio*—far more savage and bigger" than Nimrod (*Inf.* 31:84), and Briareus is of the same size, because he is said to be "*fatto come questo*—fashioned like this one," i.e. like Ephialtes, though he appears to be more ferocious (*Inf.* 31:104–105). Moreover, Antaeus must be approximately the same height as the giants Tityus and Typhon, because either one could have served as well as Antaeus to convey the travelers to the foot of the cliff (*Inf.* 31:124). Now Lucan, who is Dante's principal source for Antaeus,³⁶ states that he excelled all the giants who were created before him and fought at Phlegra:

Nondum post genitos Tellus effeta gigantas
Terribilem Libycis partum concepit in antris.
Nec tam iusta fuit terrarum gloria Typhon
Aut Tityos Briareusque ferox; caeloque pepercit,
Quod non Phlegraeis Antaeum sustulit arvis.
(Lucan, *Pharsalia* 4.593–97)

[Even after the birth of the Giants Earth was not past bearing, and she conceived a fearsome offspring [i.e. Antaeus] in the caves of Libya. She had more cause to boast of him than of Typhon or Tityos and fierce Briareus; and she dealt mercifully with the gods when she did not raise up Antaeus on the field of Phlegra.]³⁷

Consequently, we can conclude that Antaeus, far from being shorter than Nimrod, must have been of much the same height as the other giants who fought at Phlegra; if anything, he may have been somewhat taller.

(d) This indication enables us to select a suitable value for the *alla* among the various ones suggested by the commentators. The one that provides Antaeus with a height greater than Nimrod was first given by Benvenuto da Imola: "*alla est genus mensurae panni in Flandria, sicut canna Florentiae*—*alla* is a kind of measure of cloth in Flanders, like the *canna* of Florence."³⁸

(e) According to Zupko, the *canna* of Florence had two values: (1) the smaller, or mercantile, *canna* was 2.334 meters long and equaled 4 *braccia*; and (2) the larger *canna*, which other Tuscan cities used as well, was 2.918 meters long and the equivalent of 5 *braccia*.³⁹ We can exclude the smaller *canna* because it yields a total height for Antaeus of 31.12 m (by the procedure in § 4.i), which is unacceptable because it is less than Nimrod's height.

(f) Thus, using the larger, more common *canna*, Antaeus's height can be calculated thus: from navel to chin, he measured 5 *alle*, each 2.918 m, which taken together come to 14.59 m (5×2.918).

(g) According to Vitruvius, the head is $1/8$ of total height.⁴⁰

(h) Exactly half of Antaeus is embedded in rock and hence invisible; thus the visible half, less the head, amounts to $3/8$ of total height.

(i) Since Antaeus's height from navel to chin is 14.59 m, and since this is $3/8$ of his total height, his head, which is $1/8$ of the total height, must be 4.86 m ($14.59 \div 3$), giving him a half height of 19.44 m ($1/8 + 3/8$) and a total height of 38.88 m (2×19.44), or 127 feet, 6 inches.

(j) Thus Antaeus at 38.88 m is considerably higher than Nimrod at 35.6 m, just as we would expect him to be (above, § 4.c).

5. The cliff

Antaeus picks up Virgil, who holds the pilgrim, and the giant transports them from the top of the cliff to the bottom by bending over (*Inf.* 31:130–45). It is not, however, as if he were touching his toes, because the rock enclosing his lower half prevents him from bending his trunk at more than a right angle. Thus he is said to have “raised himself like the mast of a ship—*e come albero in nave si levò*” (145), the image being that of a ship that has heeled over and then righted itself. In other words, Antaeus bent until his trunk rested horizontally on the edge of the cliff, and only his arms reached lower than the cliff top. The height of the cliff, therefore, must be about equivalent to the length of Antaeus's arms, which, according to Vitruvius, are $3/8$ of his body height (see above, § 3.d). Since $3/8$ of Antaeus's height is 14.59 m (above, § 4.i), his reach, and consequently the cliff, must also be about that height, which amounts to 47 feet, 11 inches.

6. Lucifer's height

(a) *Inf.* 34:30–31: “*e più con un gigante io mi convegno, / che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia*—and I in size compare better with a giant than giants with his arms.”

(b) A man's arm is $\frac{3}{8}$ of the height of his body (above, § 3.d).

(c) The text specified that Lucifer's arm is to be compared to multiple giants (*i giganti*). This excludes Nimrod, who is smaller than the others (§ 2.i and 4.c); therefore, the calculation must be based on the height of Antaeus (38.88 m; above, § 4.i).

(d) To calculate Lucifer's height in accordance with the data provided by the text (§ 6.a), we must also know Dante's height. Boccaccio states that he was “of medium height,”⁴¹ and, to be more precise, we know that Dante's exhumed skeleton measured 165 cm (about 65 inches).⁴²

(e) Accordingly, the comparison posed by the text can be formulated thus: let a = Dante's height, b = Antaeus's height, and x = the length of Lucifer's arm; the relation will then be $a : b :: b : x$, or in algebraic notation, $a/b = b/x$. Using the values for a and b proposed above, the solution then is $x = 916.15$ meters.

(f) Lucifer's arm, therefore, is at least 916.15 meters long.⁴³ Since his arm is $\frac{3}{8}$ of his total height (§ 6.b), his minimum height can be calculated as 2443 meters ($916.15 \div \frac{3}{8} = 2443$ m), or 2.4 km = 8015 feet, or a bit over 1 1/2 miles.

(g) Lucifer's height is surely greater than this result, because the text states that the ratio between Dante's height and a giant's is *less than* the one that obtains between the height of giants and Lucifer's arm ($a : b < b : x$). Consequently, we may safely round off our result upwards to say that Lucifer is at least 2.5 kilometers high (well over 1 1/2 miles).

(h) Since Dante does not specify how much less one ratio is than the other, it is always possible that Lucifer is considerably higher than the minima we have been able to calculate; but not much higher, I should think, or otherwise Dante would not have gone to such extraordinary lengths to provide precise linear measurements and exact proportions.

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The principal results of this investigation can now be conveniently summarized in the following table.

<i>object</i>	<i>half height</i>	<i>full height</i>
Nimrod	17.8 m (58 ft., 5 in.)	35.6 m (116 ft., 10 in.)
Antaeus	19.44 m (63 ft., 10 in.)	38.88 m (127 ft., 6 in.)
Cliff	———— ————	14.59 m (47 ft., 11 in.)
Lucifer	>1221.5 m (>4007 ft., 6 in.)	>2443 m (>8015 ft.)

Discussion

In making these calculations, I have tried to respect the apparent exactitude of Dante's indications, so that the results can approximate what he had in mind. Without attempting a critique of the many previous solutions, I may illustrate my point by one simple example. Although the correct height of the Vatican *pina* has been known for over a century to be 3.56 meters, or almost precisely 11 feet, 8 inches (note 18), Dante's modern commentators have rounded this off, sometimes to 11 feet,⁴⁴ sometimes to 12,⁴⁵ not to mention inexplicable outliers of 10 and 13 feet.⁴⁶ Since Nimrod's height is ten times that of his face, rounding off to 12 feet would make him a meter taller than the correct figure (4 inches x 10 = 40 inches), while rounding down to 11 feet would double the error, making him fully two meters too short (8 inches x 10 = 80 inches). Therefore, at the risk of seeming overly precise, I have resisted the temptation to oversimplify the values.⁴⁷

One may well wonder how precise Dante could have been in his arithmetic. The fact that he specified *gran palmi*, not the usual ones, suggests that he was aware of the discrepancy that would result if the normal value of the *palmi* was used to calculate Nimrod's height (see above, § 2.j). Similarly, he could calculate how many Frisians it would take to reach Nimrod's hair (see above, § 3.j). Finally, the data he provided to determine Lucifer's height suggests that he was familiar with the "rule of three" for finding the fourth term of a proportion in which three terms are known.⁴⁸

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Dante's problems concerning the height of giants is the means he provided for verifying the solution.

We are given two separate measures of Nimrod's height—in relation to the Vatican *pina* and in terms of *gran palmi*—and when the results of these two distinct problems match, the correctness of the solution is confirmed (above, § 2.j). One advantage of this double calculation was to make it clear that Nimrod's shoulder-length hair necessarily had to be beyond the reach of three Frieslanders.

The validity of my calculations depends on the acceptance of two new factors—the Vitruvian system of human proportion on the one hand and revised values for units of measurement on the other. The importance of having a precise value for the *pina* has already been discussed; its correctness is confirmed because the result it gives for Nimrod's height is matched by the alternate calculation by *palmi*. Contrariwise, the adoption of the Florentine *palmi* is similarly justified by the results it yields in computing a height for Nimrod that closely approximates the calculation based on the *pina* (above, § 2.j). The equation of Dante's *alla* with the Tuscan *canna*, first suggested by Benvenuto, is less certain, but it nonetheless seems to be correct because it yields a height for Antaeus that is bigger than that of Nimrod, who is smaller than the giants of classical antiquity (above, § 2.i and 4.c).

The decisive innovation in my approach, however, is the use of Vitruvian proportions.⁴⁹ I say “decisive” because all of my calculations have been based on them: Nimrod's face was 1/10 of his total height (above, § 1.d); the navel was the midpoint of his body (§ 2.e); from the top of his breast to his crown was 1/4 of his height (§ 2.f); the arm length of the Frisians, Antaeus, and Lucifer was 3/8 of total height (§ 3.d, 5, and 6.b); and Antaeus's head was 1/8 part of his body (§ 4.g).

How can we be sure that Dante conceived his problems in terms of these proportions? Again, the simple answer would be that the two calculations of Nimrod's height based on these proportions are in agreement, but Dante's use of Vitruvius can be even more firmly established by two additional circumstances. First, it explains why, as Kleiner observed, “Dante has chosen, for some reason, to measure the giants only in segments—either a giant's head or a giant's headless torso.”⁵⁰ The reason that eluded him is that in Vitruvius's system each of these mysterious segments is proportionately related to total body height. By specifying that Antaeus “stood full five ells, not reckoning his head, above the rock” (*Inf.* 31:113–14), Dante requires the reader to know the proportion of the human head to the rest of the body, and to its upper half, in order to determine the

giant's total and visible height. And in Dante's day, Vitruvius was the sole source for such proportions. In Nimrod's case, the proportions are somewhat different, for the pilgrim "saw thirty great spans of him down from the place where a man buckles his cloak" (*Inf.* 31:66), which is to say that this time Dante is excluding not only the head but also the neck. This, too, is a Vitruvian segment, namely the part "from the top of the breast with the bottom of the neck . . . to the crown" (note 8), so once again the poet has served notice that he is reckoning in terms derived from Vitruvius.

The conclusive proof that Dante used Vitruvius is based on an inadvertent error. As just noted, in calculating the height of Nimrod's visible half, Dante measures "down from the place where a man buckles his cloak" (*Inf.* 31:66), which corresponds exactly to the point that Vitruvius describes as "from the top of the breast with the bottom of the neck—*cum cervicibus imis ab summo pectore*" (*De arch.* 3.1.2). But the text of Vitruvius is evidently corrupt at this point, because it allots 1/4 of body height to the segment from shoulders to crown, which would reduce the shoulders-to-navel proportion, elsewhere given as 3/8, to a mere 1/4, and would elongate the neck to be 1/8 of the total, since the head had previously been stated to be 1/8. Later, during the Renaissance, students of Vitruvius noticed the discrepancy, so that artists such as Leonardo and Dürer attempted to determine the correct proportions by observation, while Vitruvius's editors sought to remove the inconsistency by emendation.⁵¹ Dante, however, evidently based his calculations on the corrupt text, for otherwise my two solutions for Nimrod's height would not match (§ 2.j). More than any other indication, this shared oversight proves that Dante's canon of human proportions was derived from Vitruvius.



The discovery that Dante employed Vitruvian proportions should come as no surprise, for it simply adds one more author to the already long and ever-growing list of Dante's sources. This discovery does, however, open up new perspectives on the poem, for the doctrine of human proportions may illuminate other obscure passages in which the human body is divided, such as the varying degrees to which the violent against their neighbor are submerged in Phlegethon (*Inf.* 12:103–25) or the graded composition of the Old Man of Crete (14:106–11). Although such

investigations lie beyond the scope of this paper, I cannot conclude without addressing another question, one that is fundamental to my topic: Why did Dante lay such stress on human proportions in connection with the giants and Lucifer?

Those who think it is impossible to solve the problems Dante posed concerning the height of Lucifer and the giants "have argued that the purpose of the measurements is entirely stylistic, a function of the *Inferno's* realism."⁵² But surely Dante could have conveyed an impression of exactness without reduplicating the measurements and proportioning them to segments of the human body. Consequently even those who are unconvinced by any proposed solution cannot ignore these more general questions: Why did Dante, by multiplying measurements, repeatedly re-emphasize the magnitude of the giants and Lucifer? And, moreover, why did he relate these magnitudes to human proportions? Since the answer would explain why Dante used Vitruvius, this paper may fittingly conclude by suggesting a possible rationale underlying Dante's concern with human magnitude.

Humans have magnitude, as do all bodies; angels, being intelligences, do not. Thus proposition 7 of the *Liber de causis* proves "that an intelligence is a substance that has no magnitude. . . ."⁵³ Unlike angels, bodies occupy space (*locus*), and they do so because they are made of matter. Hence only material objects can be measured in the sense that they can be divided into spatial units. Consequently, by stressing the measurements of the giants, Dante is emphasizing their materiality.

The point of this emphasis on materiality is that Lucifer, although once an angelic intelligence, is now reduced to an immense mass of matter. His most impressive feature is undoubtedly his size, and by inviting us to measure him, Dante not only draws attention to Satan's tremendous size but also to the fact that he now has a material body. How this was effected is not made explicit, but the explanation would seem to be that, according to Aquinas, angels can *assume* bodies composed of air.⁵⁴ This ability was deduced from Paul's description of the devil as "the prince of the power of this air—*principem potestatis aeris huius*,"⁵⁵ and Dante himself explains that the devil had this power "by the power his nature gave—*per la virtù che sua natura diede*" (*Purg.* 5.114). Indeed, Lucifer in hell dramatically exercises this power by beating his wings, which not only causes him to be mistaken for a windmill (*Inf.* 34:6) but also ironically imprisons him by making the waters of Cocytus freeze over, not to mention blowing the

stench of the last *bolgia* upwards as far as to the sixth circle (*Inf.* 11:4–5). Since air was one of the four elements, or kinds of matter, these air-related references reinforce the impression of Lucifer's materiality.

Lucifer is more than just a huge lump of matter, however: he is still possessed of intelligence, as Buonconte da Montefeltro makes clear when he describes the devil ("quel d'inferno," *Purg.* 5:104): "Evil will that seeks only evil he joined with intellect—*Giunse quel mal voler che pur mal chiede / con lo 'ntelletto*" (112–13). In this respect he resembles the giants, whom Nature did well to cease making, the narrator comments, because "where the instrument of the mind is added to an evil will and to great power, men can make no defense against it—*dove l'argomento de la mente / s'aggiugne al mal volere e a la possa, / nessun riparo vi può far la gente*" (*Inf.* 31:55–57). Both giants and fallen angels have lost "the good of the intellect—*il ben de l'intelletto*" (3:18) but not the intellect itself.

Lucifer and the giants therefore resemble humans both in being material, and hence measurable, and in possessing intellect, but the significance of these similarities is only revealed when we are told that the bodies of all three creatures are related by the proportions of the human body (*Inf.* 34:30–31). This is not surprising in the case of the giants, since Scripture declares that they were born of the "daughters of men" (Genesis 6:4), but one must wonder why Lucifer assumed human shape when he materialized. For the same reason, one must suppose, that the other, obedient angels are represented, both in Scripture and in the *Comedy*, as having the form of human beings. The resemblance is due to a common exemplar: both men and angels were created in God's image.⁵⁶ Traditional theology would restrict the comparison to the noncorporeal features that men and angels share, especially intelligence, but I would suggest that for Dante the human form was itself proportioned to God's image.

This appears from Dante's last riddle, the one that concludes the *Comedy*. The pilgrim, having seen God imaged as three circles, perceives "our effigy—*la nostra effige*" depicted in the circle representing God the Son, and he "wished to see how the image conformed to the circle and how it has its place therein—*veder voleva come si convenne / l'imgo al cerchio e come vi s'indova*" (*Par.* 33:131, 137–38). The answer comes to him in a flash (141), but the narrator leaves us to guess what it might have been. My conjecture, which I argue at length elsewhere,⁵⁷ is that Vitruvius provides the solution, for he asserts that "if a man lies on his back with hands and feet outspread, and the centre of a circle is placed on his navel, his

fingers and toes will be touched by the circumference.”⁵⁸ This, of course, is the *homo ad circulum* made famous, not to say banal, by Leonardo da Vinci's illustration of the Vitruvian text. If I am right in this proposal, it would explain why Dante stressed human proportions in the last canto of the *Inferno*: the discovery there of the importance of the Vitruvian canon prepares the reader for its enigmatic application in the last and parallel canto of the *Paradiso*.



The keys provided by Zupko's metrology and Vitruvius's canon of human proportions have enabled me to provide a consistent, coherent, and comprehensive calculation of the dimensions not only of Dante's giants but also of Lucifer himself. The most significant consequence of this discovery is the proof that Dante knew and used the Vitruvian canon, which can accordingly be applied to interpret the *Comedy*'s other references to the human body, most notably when it appears in the poem's final vision.

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NOTES

1. John Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld: Daring and Error in Dante's "Comedy,"* *Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 153, n. 33. Typical is Giorgio Padoan, "Anteo," in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 6 vols. (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1970–1978), 1:296–297, who reckons the height of all the giants to be 25 m (82 ft.). Most recently, Robert Hollander calculated Nimrod's height at 70 feet: *Inferno*, trans. Robert and Jean Hollander (New York: Doubleday, 2000), p. 531, ad *Inf.* 31:58–66.

2. Notably, Kleiner, *Mismapping*, pp. 42–47, but also Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez in *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, vol. 1: *Inferno*, trans. Robert M. Durling (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 492, ad *Inf.* 31:60.

3. Ronald Edward Zupko, *Italian Weights and Measures from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 145 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1981), pp. 183–85.

4. The Dartmouth Dante Project (<http://dciswww.dartmouth.edu>) provides 57 comments on *Inf.* 31:113; I note the name of the first commentator to give the value of the *alla* plus the number of subsequent commentators who agree with this figure: 1 *braccio* (Graziolo de' Bambaglioli + 4); 1 *braccio* + 1/2 *palm* (Maramuro); 2 *braccia* (Guido da Pisa + 14); 2 + *braccia* (Pietro di Dante); 1 *canna* (Benvenuto); 1 *canna* = 2 1/2 *braccia* (Anonimo fiorentino + 15); 1 1/2 *canne* (Torraca).

5. See note 3, above; Ronald Edward Zupko, *French Weights and Measures before the Revolution: A Dictionary of Provincial and Local Units* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978); and idem, *British*

Weights & Measures: A History from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1977).

6. E.g. by Robert Hollander, *Inferno*, p. 587, ad *Inf.* 34.30–31.

7. To explain how Noah's ark symbolized the body of Christ, Augustine provided some human proportions: a man's total height is 6 times his side-to-side breadth and 10 times his back-to-belly depth: *De civitate Dei* 15.26, ed. Eligius Dekkers and Jean Fraipont, *Corpus Christianorum*, Series Latina, vol. 38 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), p. 493. But since Augustine gave no arm-to-height proportion, these figures are of no help in determining Lucifer's height. For the considerable influence of this passage, however, see Bruno Reudenbach, "In mensuram humani corporis: Zur Herkunft der Auslegung und Illustration von Vitruv III 1 im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert," *Text und Bild: Aspekte des Zusammenwerkes zweier Künste in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1980), pp. 651–88, at pp. 675–77.

8. Vitruvius, *On architecture*, ed. and trans. Frank Granger, Loeb Classical Library, nos. 251 and 280, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1931), 1:159–160. Subsequent references are to this edition and translation unless otherwise stated.

9. *Speculum naturale* 28.2 (Douai, 1624; rpt. Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1964), quoted by Stefan Schuler, *Vitruv im Mittelalter: Die Rezeption von "De architectura" von der Antike bis in die frühe Neuzeit*, *Pictura et Poësis*, no. 12 (Köln: Böhlau, 1999), p. 184.

10. The omission was noted as a general rule by Erwin Panofsky, "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection of the History of Styles," in his *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Papers in and on Art History* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1955), p. 90, n. 64: "Vitruvius, so zealously exploited and interpreted by Renaissance writers, had not been unfamiliar to the Middle Ages . . . ; but it is precisely the specifications of the proportions which were generally neglected by mediaeval writers."

11. Schuler, *Vitruv im Mittelalter*, pp. 118 and 339.

12. Schuler, *Vitruv im Mittelalter*, p. 160 (table 6).

13. I refer by number to Schuler's repertory of Vitruvius manuscripts: *Vitruv im Mittelalter*, pp. 359–67.

14. Yet another early Trecento copy is Escorial, O.II.5, which Schuler inadvertently places among his thirteenth-century manuscripts, although he dates its Vitruvian part "Beginn 14. Jh.": *Vitruv im Mittelalter*, p. 359 (no. 28).

15. Schuler, *Vitruv im Mittelalter*, pp. 92 and 95, citing Lucia A. Ciapponi, "Il *De architectura* di Vitruvio nel primo umanesimo," *Italia medievale e umanistica* 3 (1960), pp. 59–99.

16. Joel Brink, "Carpentry and Symmetry in Cimabue's Santa Croce Crucifix," *Burlington Magazine* 120, no. 907 (Oct. 1978), pp. 645–58, at pp. 647–49, 651; see also his diagram H. See also John White, "Measurement, Design and Carpentry in Duccio's *Maestà*," *Art Bulletin* 55 (1973), 334–66 and 547–69, at p. 357.

17. Mary D. Edwards, "A Possible Vitruvian Intrusion into the Painting of Giotto," *Source Notes in the History of Art*, 1, no. 4 (1982), pp. 6–8. Panofsky, however, considered the Vitruvian division of the face into thirds to be a medieval commonplace: "Human Proportions," pp. 90–91, n. 64.

18. See the critique of Rudolf Wittkower's thesis by Frank Zöllner, *Vitruvs Proportionsfigur: Quellenkritische Studien zur Kunstliteratur des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (Worms: Werner, 1987) and the review by John Onians in the *Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain Newsletter*, no. 39 (Winter, 1988), 6–8.

19. Ristoro, *La composizione del mondo* 2.1: "[I know how to] disegnare e arteficiare oro ed argento, e disegnare e mettere colori" (quoted by Anna Maria Finoli, "Ristoro d'Arezzo," in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 4:983–84, at 983).

20. Ristoro (Restoro) d'Arezzo, *La composizione del mondo* 2.8.20, ed. Alberto Morino, *La composizione del mondo colle su cascioni*, *Scrittori italiani e testi antichi pubblicati dall' Accademia della Crusca* (Firenze: Accademia della Crusca, 1976), p. 230; quoted Zöllner, *Vitruvs Proportionsfigur*, p. 57, n. 57.

21. Zöllner, *Vitruvs Proportionsfigur*, pp. 56–58 and 211.

22. In the following calculations, the metric system is employed; however, the U.S. equivalent is given for each result, the conversion factor being 1 meter = 39.37 inches.

23. Unless otherwise stated, the translations are those of Charles S. Singleton, *The Divine Comedy Translated with a Commentary*, Bollingen Series, no. 80, 6 vols. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970–1975); Petrocchi's text of the poem is cited from the same source.

24. Walther Amelung, *Die Sculpturen des vaticanischen Museums*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1903), p. 896.

25. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.2: "*Corpus enim hominis ita natura composuit, uti os capitis a mento ad frontem summam et radices imas capilli esset decimae partis*—For Nature has so planned the human body that the face from the chin to the top of the forehead and the roots of the hair is a tenth part."

26. Zupko, *Italian Weights and Measures*, pp. 183–84.

27. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.3: "*Item corporis centrum medium naturaliter est umbilicus*—Now the navel is naturally the exact centre of the body."

28. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.2: "*cum cervicibus imis ab summo pectore . . . ad summum verticem quartae*." I report the passage as Dante would have read it, although later readers considered it corrupt and proposed various emendations. Granger, like all modern editors, adopted the emendation proposed in 1758 by Berardo Galiani, so the modern text reads: "*cum cervicibus imis ab summo pectore ad imas radices capillorum sextae, <a medio pectore> ad summum verticem quartae*." Dante plainly indicates that his measurement begins at the top of the breast, going "down from the place where a man buckles his cloak" (*Inf.* 31:66). Cf. Panofsky, "Human Proportions," pp. 55–107, at p. 67, n. 16.

29. *Benevenuto de Imola Comentum super Dantis Comoediam*, ed. Jacopo Philippo Lacaita, 5 vols. (Florentiae: Barbèra, 1887), 2:464, ad *Inf.* 31:65–66: "*Quamvis enim alemanni naturaliter et communiter sint magni, tamen illi de regione Frisiae sunt maximi*."

30. Benvenuto, *Comentum*, 2:473, ad *Inf.* 31:113.

31. Panofsky, "Human Proportions," p. 67, n. 16: "breadth of the chest = 1/4."

32. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.3: "*Nam si a pedibus imis ad summum caput mensum erit eaque mensura relata fuerit ad manus pansas, inveniatur eadem latitudo uti altitudo . . .*—For if we measure from the sole of the foot to the top of the head, and apply the measure to the outstretched hands, the breadth will be found equal to the height. . . ."

33. Not too far off from the 22 feet posited by Hollander (*Inf.* p. 531, ad *Inf.* 31:58–66), who supposes that the Frisians are "standing on one another's shoulders" and adds an arm's length.

34. *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy*, ed. Peter Brieger, Millard Meiss, and Charles S. Singleton, Bollingen Series, no. 81, 2 vols. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), 2:300–07.

35. There is no entry for *alla* or its variant forms in Zupko, *Italian Weights and Measures*.

36. Padoan, "Anteo," in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 1:296–97.

37. Lucan, *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, trans. J. D. Duff, Loeb Classical Library, no. 220 (London: Heinemann, 1928), p. 219.

38. Benvenuto, *Comentum*, 2:473. The Anonimo fiorentino (ca. 1400) agreed, but stated that the *canna* was the equivalent of 2 1/2 *braccia*. Presumably he meant the Tuscan *braccio* of 0.584 m that was used at Florence (Zupko, *Italian Weights and Measures*, p. 46), in which case the statement is not true for either of the Florentine *canne* (§ 4.e, above). Despite this discrepancy, the Anonimo and the 15 commentators who followed his lead (see n. 4, above) do agree with Benvenuto that the *alla* was the equivalent of a *canna*, so my assumption of this equivalence has considerable support in the commentary tradition.

39. Zupko, *Italian Weights and Measures*, pp. 65–66. The larger *canna* of 5 *braccia* was used at Arezzo, Pistoia, San Miniato, Grosseto, Livorno, Lucca, Pisa, Volterra, Siena, and Montepulciano.

40. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.2: "*caput a mento ad summum verticem octavae*—the head from the chin to the crown, an eighth part."

41. Boccaccio, *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, [16]: "Fu adunque questo nostro poeta di mediocre statura. . . ." In his *Opere in versi*, Corbaccio, *Trattatello in laude di Dante, prose latine, epistole*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci, La letteratura italiana: Storia e testi, vol. 9 (Milano: Ricciardi, 1965), p. 608.

42. According to Ricci (see preceding note). Hollander, in his reckoning, was thus too generous

in adopting 6 feet as Dante's height "merely for the purposes of calculation" (*Inferno*, p. 587, ad *Inf.* 34:30–31).

43. Hollander, after making a similar calculation, mistakenly took the result to be Lucifer's height rather than the length of his arm (*Inferno*, p. 587, ad *Inf.* 34:30–31).

44. Hollander, *Inferno*, p. 531, ad *Inf.* 31:58–66: "about eleven feet."

45. Singleton, *Divine Comedy*, 2:569, ad *Inf.* 31:59: "over four yards high"; Kleiner, *Mismapping*, p. 46: "12 ft."

46. *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, ed. C. H. Grandgent, 2nd ed. (Boston: Heath, 1933), p. 279 (ad *Inf.* 31:59): "originally perhaps ten or eleven feet in height"; Durling and Martinez, *Inferno*, p. 492, ad *Inf.* 31:59: "now about thirteen feet high."

47. In making calculations, however, I have generally rounded off to the nearest hundredth (second decimal place), e.g. Nimrod's height of 35.616 becomes 35.62 (§ 2.i).

48. The rule is that the product of the means equals the product of the extremes. It was well known in the Latin West since the twelfth century from al-Khwārizmī's *Liber algebre*: Michael S. Mahoney, "Mathematics," in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph R. Strayer, 13 vols. (New York: Scribner's, 1982–1989), 8:205–22, at p. 212. Its geometrical equivalent is given by Euclid, *Elementa* 6.11–12.

49. Kleiner assumes that the proportion of Antaeus's "torso" to his "entire body" is "3/8" (*Mismapping*, p. 37), but he does so arbitrarily, without explanation.

50. Kleiner, *Mismapping*, p. 37.

51. See note 22, above. On Renaissance revisions, see Panofsky, "Human Proportions," pp. 92–103.

52. Kleiner, *Mismapping*, p. 42.

53. *Liber de causis* 7, in Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Book of Causes*, trans. and annotated by Vincent A. Guagliardo, Charles R. Hess, and Richard C. Taylor (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), p. 54. Adriaan Pattin, "Le *Liber de causis*: Édition établie à l'aide de 90 manuscrits avec introduction et notes," *Tijdschrift voor filosofie* 28 (1966), 90–203, at p. 151, § 71: "Iam ergo verificatum est quod intelligentia substantia est quae non est cum magnitudine. . . ."

54. *Summa theologiae*, 1 q.51 a.2 ad 3. See *La Divina Commedia*, ed. Natalino Sapegno, *La letteratura italiana: Storia e testi*, vol. 4 (Milano: Ricciardi, 1957), p. 448, ad *Purg.* 5:112–14. Dante would seem to have generalized this angelic power to form aerial bodies by extending it to disembodied souls (*Purg.* 25:94–96).

55. Ephesians 2.2b. The air in question, according to the *Glossa ordinaria*, is the "misty" or "foggy" air of the underworld: *Biblia latina cum Glossa ordinaria: Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps*, Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81, 4 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 4:371ra, ad v. "aeris huius": "Caliginosus aer infernus est demonum." Aquinas, however, argues that until Judgment Day the fallen angels have power over the air of this world: *Super epistolam ad Ephesios lectura*, cap. 2, lect. 1, ed. Raphael Cai in *S. Thomae Aquinatis . . . Super epistolas S. Pauli lectura*, 8th ed., 2 vols. (Taurini: Marietti, 1953), 2:22 (no. 77).

56. Aquinas, *Summa theol.*, 1 q.93 a.3 resp. John of Damascus was perhaps the first to state expressly that angels were created in God's image: Jaroslav Pelikan, *Imago Dei: The Byzantine Apologia for Icons*, Bollingen Series, no. XXXV/36 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 173.

57. "Vitruvius and Dante's *Imago Dei*," forthcoming in *Word & Image*.

58. Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.1.3: "Namque si homo conlocatus fuerit supinus manibus et pedibus pansis circinique conlocatum centrum in umbilico eius, circumagendo rotundationem utrarumque manuum et pedum digiti linea tangentur" (trans. Granger, 1:161; I correct a misprint of "figure" for "fingers").

Philosophical Songs: The “Song of Iopas” in the *Aeneid* and the Francesca Episode in *Inferno* 5

PAUL CARRANZA

Toward the end of the first book of the *Aeneid*, the Carthaginian bard Iopas steps forward and recites a philosophical poem to the Trojans and Carthaginians that have assembled at a banquet at Dido’s court. The subject of Iopas’ song is natural philosophy: according to Vergil’s summary of it, Iopas sings of a solar eclipse, of the origin of humans and animals, and of fire and rain; he sings of the constellations, why the winter days are shorter, and what makes nights longer:¹

cithara crinitus Iopas
personat aurata, docuit quem maximus Atlas.
hic canit errantem lunam solisque labores,
unde hominum genus et pecudes, unde imber et ignes,
Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas geminosque Triones,
quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles
hiberni, uel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet.

(*Aen.* 1.740–46)

(Long-haired Iopas, whom mighty Atlas once taught, makes the hall ring with his golden lyre. He sings of the wandering moon and the sun’s toils; whence sprang man and beast, whence rain and fire; of Arcturus, the rainy Hyades and the twin Bears; why wintry suns make such haste to dip themselves in Ocean, or what delay stays the slowly passing nights.)

As a song about the nature of the cosmos, this passage has suggestive links to the *Divine Comedy*,² and these links were noted early on by Boccaccio,

who in his *Esposizioni* on the *Comedy* refers to the song in explaining Vergil's introduction of himself as a character in *Inferno* 1:³

“Poeta fui, e cantai di quel giusto
figliuol d’Anchise che venne di Troia,
poi che ’l superbo Ilíon fu combusto. . . .”
(*Inf.* 1.73–75)

In glossing the phrase *e cantai* (1.73), Boccaccio explains why Vergil says he “sang” his poem instead of “wrote” it (“composi”). One explanation that Boccaccio gives is that noble Greek youths felt obliged to learn to sing and play an instrument, and they often performed their songs at banquets. Boccaccio continues his explanation by comparing the songs of these Greeks to both those of his own day and to that of Iopas:

E non erano li loro canti di cose vane, come il più delle canzoni odierne sono, anzi erano versi poetici, ne’ quali d’altissime materie o di laudevoli operazioni da valenti uomini adoperate [si trattava], sì come noi possiam vedere nella fine del primo dello *Eneida* di Virgilio, dove, dopo la notabile cena di Didone fatta ad Enea, Iopa, sonando la cetera, canta gli errori del sole e della luna e la prima generazione degli uomini e degli altri animali e donde fosse l’origine delle piove e del fuoco e altre simili cose: dal quale atto poté nascere il dirsi che i poetici versi si cantino.⁴

Since Boccaccio’s time, however, there has been almost no attempt to see the *Comedy* in relation to Iopas’ song, the point at which philosophical poetry makes its most emphatic entrance into Vergil’s epic.⁵ My argument in this study is that Dante was influenced by the Vergilian passage, and that influence can be seen in the character of Francesca in *Inferno* 5.

The reasons for Dante’s potential interest in the song of Iopas are many. To begin with, it is the most prominent example of poetry within the fictional world of the *Aeneid*.⁶ The subject matter of Iopas’ song is also highly relevant to Dante’s project in the *Comedy*. Iopas’ song is a didactic poem which explains the workings of the cosmos; it clearly alludes to Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*, the greatest surviving example of Roman philosophical poetry.⁷ On a basic level, the *Comedy* also aspires to be a representation of the cosmos, and Patrick Boyde’s book *Dante Philomythes and Philosopher* is an extended discussion of this aspect of the *Comedy* with special reference to Lucretius.⁸ More specifically, Boyde has pointed out Dante’s preoccupation with the causes of phenomena within the *Comedy*.⁹

Iopas' song is also concerned with the causes of things: of men and beasts, rain and fire, and the seasons.

In order to understand Dante's allusions to Iopas' song, it would be useful to review the background of the Vergilian passage. In addition to Lucretius, the Homeric poems provided another important model for Iopas and his song. Especially important for the portrayal of Iopas is Demodocus, who entertains Odysseus and his Phaeacian hosts in *Odyssey* 8.¹⁰ The figure of the bard performing at banquets became an epic convention followed by later writers, including Vergil.¹¹

Another model for Iopas' song is found in Vergil's own poetry.¹² Vergil himself, speaking in *Georgics* 2, declares his intention to write philosophical poetry using lines that provide the closest model of Iopas' song:¹³

Me uero primum dulces ante omnia Musae,
quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore,
accipiant caelique uias et sidera monstrent,
defectus solis uarios lunaeque labores;
unde tremor terris, qua ui maria alta tumescant
obicibus ruptis rursusque in se ipsa residant,
quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles
hiberni, uel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet.

(*Georg.* 2.475–82)

(But as for me—first may the Muses, sweet beyond compare, whose holy emblems, under the spell of a mighty love, I bear, take me to themselves, and show me heaven's pathways, the stars, *the sun's many eclipses, the moon's many labors; whence come tremblings of the earth, the force to make deep seas swell and burst their barriers, then sink back upon themselves; why wintry suns make such haste to dip themselves in Ocean, or what delay stays the slowly passing nights.*)

This passage (the last two verses of which are repeated verbatim in Iopas' song at *Aen.* 1.745–46) represents the kind of philosophical poetry that Iopas sings as a praiseworthy poetic activity that Vergil himself aspires to undertake.¹⁴

The material of Iopas' song also finds its way into the cosmological exposition of Anchises to Aeneas during the latter's trip to the Underworld in Book 6. Line 743 of Book 1, in which Iopas is represented as telling of the origin of men and beasts (*unde hominum genus et pecudes, unde imber et ignes*), is repeated with slight variations in *Aen.* 6.728:¹⁵

“Principio caelum ac terras camposque liquentis
lucentemque globum lunae Titaniaque astra

spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet.
inde hominum pecudumque genus uitaeque uolantum
et quae marmoreo fert monstra sub aequore pontus.
igneus est ollis uigor et caelestis origo
seminibus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant
terrenique hebetant artus moribundaeque membra.
hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, neque auras
dispiciunt clausae tenebris et carcere caeco.”

(6.724–34)

(“First, know that heaven and earth and the watery plains, the moon’s bright sphere and Titan’s star, a spirit within sustains; in all the limbs mind moves the mass and mingles with the mighty frame. *Thence spring the races of man and beast, the life of winged creatures*, and the monsters ocean bears beneath his marble surface. Fiery is the vigor and divine the source of those seeds of life, so far as harmful bodies clog them not, or earthly limbs and frames born but to die. Hence their fears and desires, their griefs and joys; nor do they discern the heavenly light, penned as they are in the gloom of their dark dungeon.”)

This passage has long been recognized as an influence on the *Comedy*,¹⁶ and Christian readers of Vergil before Dante perceived a connection between it and Iopas’ song; for some of these readers the lines prefigured the Christian revelation of a sole, omnipotent god responsible for all life.¹⁷

From the perspective of its possible influence on Dante, Iopas’ song has other models that connect it to a venerable tradition of philosophical and cosmological speculation. One of these connections is the resemblance between Iopas’ wisdom derived from the heavens and Aristotle’s account of the beginnings of philosophy in his *Metaphysics*:¹⁸

It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize; wondering in the first place at obvious perplexities, and then by gradual progression raising questions about the greater matters too, *e.g.* about the changes of the moon and of the sun, about the stars and about the origin of the universe.

This passage, a part of which may have been a direct source for the language used to describe the eclipse depicted in Iopas’ song (*solisque labores* [*Aen.* 1.742]) and its source in the *Georgics* (*lunaeque labores* [*Georg.* 2:478]),¹⁹ was held in high regard by Dante, who referred to it several times and quoted it directly at least once.²⁰ As Patrick Boyde notes, it is wonder of the kind Aristotle describes that drives Dante-protagonist on his ascent through *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*.²¹

The meaning of Iopas' song has been the subject of much recent debate among Vergilian scholars. Most commentators see it as having positive connotations because of its connection to philosophy, and the fact that its model in the *Georgics* was held up by Vergil (or at least his narrative persona) as his poetic ideal.²² On the other hand, others have argued that the kind of knowledge which Iopas represents is inadequate to understand the workings of the world depicted in the *Aeneid*, since Iopas' natural philosophy seems to know nothing of the actions of the gods, who directly influence major events in the poem.²³ For the purposes of the song's influence on Francesca's portrayal in *Inferno* 5, it is important to highlight the philosophical and didactic character of Iopas' song, and that it is placed at the beginning of Dido's love for Aeneas, as we shall see. For a similar dichotomy between reason and passion is found in Francesca's story; as Dante-protagonist learns, the Second Circle of Hell is the place that punishes "i peccator carnali, / che la ragion sommettono al talento" (*Inf.* 5.38–39).²⁴

First we must investigate more fully the context of Iopas song before discussing its relationship to *Inferno* 5. Before the banquet begins, Cupid, disguised as Aeneas' son Ascanius, inspires Dido with love for Aeneas and makes her forget about her dead husband Sychaeus (*Aen.* 1.715–22). As the banquet begins, however, Dido is very much the queen of Carthage, pouring a libation and toasting the guests (*Aen.* 1.728–37). Iopas' recites his song while the banquet is in progress. His performance is followed, first by applause, then by Dido's questions to Aeneas and her request that he narrate his adventures:

cithara crinitus Iopas
personat aurata, docuit quem maximus Atlas.
hic canit errantem lunam solisque labores,
unde hominum genus et pecudes, unde imber et ignes,
Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas geminosque Triones,
quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles
hiberni, uel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet;
ingeminant plausu Tyrii, Troesque sequuntur.
nec non et uario noctem sermone trahebat
infelix Dido longumque bibebat amorem,
multa super Priamo rogitans, super Hectore multa;
nunc quibus Aurorae uenisset filius armis,
nunc quales Diomedis equi, nunc quantus Achilles.
"immo age et a prima dic, hospes, origine nobis

insidias" inquit "Danaum casusque tuorum
erroresque tuos; nam te iam septima portat
omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus aestas."

(*Aen.* 1.740–56)

(Long-haired Iopas, whom mighty Atlas once taught, makes the hall ring with his golden lyre. He sings of the wandering moon and the sun's toils; whence sprang man and beast, whence rain and fire; of Arcturus, the rainy Hyades and the twin Bears; why wintry suns make such haste to dip themselves in Ocean, or what delay stays the slowly passing nights. With shout on shout the Tyrians applaud, and the Trojans follow. No less did unhappy Dido prolong the night with varied talk and drank deep draughts of love, asking much of Priam, of Hector much; now of the armor in which came the son of Dawn; now of the wondrous steeds of Diomedes; now of the greatness of Achilles. "Nay, come," she cries, "and tell us, my guest, from the first beginning the treachery of the Greeks, the misfortunes of your people, and your own wanderings; for already a seventh summer bears you a wanderer over every land and sea.")

Iopas' song marks a pivotal moment in the development of Dido's passion, for in contrast to her behavior before Iopas' song, the aftermath of the song finds her deeply in love with Aeneas, as the narrator makes plain (*infelix Dido longumque bibebat amorem* [749]). As Robert D. Brown has argued, Iopas' song marks Dido's transformation from 'queen' to 'lover.'²⁵ This contrast is marked by a similarity in style between the summary of Iopas' song and that of Dido's questions to Aeneas which immediately follow it. As Brown has shown, the direct objects and indirect questions in the description of Iopas' song (*errantem lunam . . . Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas . . . unde hominum genus . . . , quid tantum Oceano . . .*) are mirrored in those ascribed to Dido (*multa super Priamo rogicans, super Hectore multa . . . quibus Aurorae venisset filius . . . quantus Achilles . . .*).²⁶ The subject matter of the two passages is very different, however: Iopas' investigations of the nature of the heavens is contrasted to Dido's interest in Aeneas' failed Homeric adventures. In Brown's view, Dido's preference for Aeneas' story over Iopas' song is another indication that the queen has succumbed to passion.²⁷ Brown further notes that something of this dichotomy was perceived by Servius, the author of a fourth-century commentary on Vergil—a text that, incidentally, Dante probably consulted.²⁸ Servius comments on *Aeneid* 1.742, the beginning of the summary of Iopas' song, that "bene philosophica introducitur cantilena in convivio reginae adhuc castae: contra inter nymphas, ubi solae feminae erant, ait

Vulcani Martisque dolos et dulcia furta” (“the philosophical song is appropriately introduced in the banquet of a still-chaste queen, compared to when, among the nymphs, where there were only women, [Vergil] speaks of the tricks of Vulcan and Mars and stolen love”).²⁹ What seems important here is the word “adhuc”—“still,” but not to be for long. So even in antiquity a connection was drawn between Iopas’ philosophical song and the passion that Dido develops for Aeneas soon afterward.

With this in mind we can turn to *Inferno* 5 and its allusions to the banquet at Dido’s palace. As Francesca and Paolo appear out of a crowd of shades that includes Dido, Dante-protagonist elicits their story from Francesca:

“Francesca, i tuoi martiri
a lagrimar mi fanno tristo e pio.
Ma dimmi: al tempo d’i dolci sospiri,
a che e come concedette amore
che conosceste i dubbiosi disiri?”
E quella a me: “Nessun maggior dolore
che ricordarsi del tempo felice
ne la miseria; e ciò sa ’l tuo dottore.
Ma s’a conoscer la prima radice
del nostro amor tu hai cotanto affetto,
dirò come colui che piange e dice.”
(*Inf.* 5.116–26)

Francesca’s response, as commentators have pointed out,³⁰ is an echo of the Dido–Aeneas interaction in *Aeneid* 2; the last *terzina* in the passage quoted above is modeled on Aeneas’ response to Dido’s request, made following Iopas’ song, that the Trojan hero tell his story:

sed si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros
et breuiter Troiae supremum audire laborem,
quamquam animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit,
incipiam.
(*Aen.* 2.10–13)

(Yet if such is your desire to learn of our disasters, and in few words to hear of Troy’s last agony, though my mind shudders to remember and has recoiled in pain, I will begin.)

The allusion thus signals a gender reversal in Dante’s text: Dante-protagonist becomes Dido, who interrogates Francesca as Aeneas.³¹ Francesca

goes on to tell the story of her disastrous love affair with Paolo, just as Aeneas told of his failed Homeric adventures beginning with the sack of Troy. But this allusion to the Aeneas-Dido exchange also carries an allusion to Iopas' song. For just as Dido's interest in *Aeneid* 1 in Aeneas' adventures contrasts unfavorably with the philosophical themes of Iopas' song, the exchange between Dante-protagonist and Francesca employs philosophical language in a way inappropriate to a story of adulterous passion. In particular, Francesca's promise to tell of "la prima radice del nostro amor" puts the passage in the realm of the *causes* that mark the preoccupation of Dante's philosophical poetry.³² The story that Francesca goes on to tell, however, is modeled on Arthurian romance and lyric eroticism, and alludes to philosophical causation only parodically. The model for this contrast is the end of *Aeneid* 1: Iopas' song and its debased reflection in Dido's questioning of Aeneas, followed in turn by Aeneas' narration in Books 2 and 3. In regards to Aeneas' story, Robert Brown points out that the Trojan hero has been specifically asked by Dido to relate his adventures "from the first origin":

"a *prima* dic, hospes, *origine* nobis
insidias" inquit "Danaum casusque tuorum
erroresque tuos. . ."

(*Aen.* 1.753–55)

Aeneas goes on to speak of the origin of his misfortunes "just as Iopas has sung of the origin of human beings, animals, and the elements."³³ Indeed, this shift from Iopas' philosophical themes to Dido's interest in Aeneas' adventures and Aeneas' subsequent narration of them has led Brown to suggest that "the song of Iopas and the narration of Aeneas elicited by Dido represent contrasting, or even rival, poetic performances."³⁴ Also relevant to *Inferno* 5 is the fact that in the *Aeneid* Aeneas' story completes Dido's seduction.³⁵ Francesca's story is both a tale of seduction and the cause of another seduction—that of Dante-protagonist, who faints from grief after hearing Francesca's story. The canto's allusions to philosophical poetry, and in particular to Iopas' song, throw this victory of desire over reason into even sharper relief.

A further connection to Iopas' song may reside in another text that lies behind Francesca's story: Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*.³⁶ When asked to tell her story, Francesca's first words contrast her present plight to the happiness she enjoyed as a lover on earth:

Nessun maggior dolore
che ricordarsi del tempo felice
ne la miseria. . . .

(*Inf.* 5.121–23)

Commentators have seen this as an allusion to the complaint that an imprisoned and condemned Boethius directs to Lady Philosophy in the *Consolation*: “Sed hoc est, quod recolentem vehementius coquit; nam in omni adversitate fortunae infelicissimum est genus infortunii fuisse felicem” (2p4.2–3) (“But this is precisely what roasts me more fiercely as I contemplate it, for all of Fortune’s blows, the unhappiest aspect of misfortune is to have known happiness”).³⁷ Boethius’ lament is an important intertext because the lost happiness the philosopher rues is, in part, the kind of philosophical speculation—the search for causes—that characterizes Iopas in the *Aeneid*. The contrast between Boethius’ earlier philosophic endeavors and his present misfortune is made by Lady Philosophy herself in the second poem of the *Consolation*:

Hic quondam caelo liber aperto
suetus in aetherios ire meatus
cernebat rosei lumina solis,
visebat gelidae sidera lunae
et quaecumque vagos stella recursus
exercet varios flexa per orbes,
comprehensam numeris victor habebat.
Quin etiam causas, unde sonora
flamina sollicitent aequora ponti,
quis volvat stabilem spiritus orbem
vel cur Hesperias sidus in undas
casurum rutilo surgat ab ortu,
quid veris placidas temperet horas,
ut terram roseis floribus ornet. . . .

.
rimari solitus atque latentis
naturae varias reddere causas. . . .

(1m2.6–23)

(He who once was accustomed to follow the movements of the heavenly bodies in the open sky without restraint, used to see the lights of the rose-colored sun and behold the stars of the frigid moon. And any star that comes and goes turning through many orbits he grasped through measurements in triumph. And also the causes—from whence the sonorous winds shake the calm surface of the sea, what

force turns the stable earth, or why the sun on its way to setting amidst the Hesperian waves rises from the reddened east, what calms the hours of spring such that it adorns the earth with blooming flowers. . . . These he was wont to investigate and report the many causes of hidden nature.)

Commentators have noted the similarity between Boethius' philosophic activity as described by Lady Philosophy here and the philosophical poetry in the tradition of Iopas' song.³⁸ Indeed, this poem and others in the *Consolation* make clear that Boethius knew Iopas' song and related Vergilian passages.³⁹

Francesca's allusions to philosophical discourse about the causes of phenomena occur even earlier than her allusion to Vergil and Boethius. In her first address to Dante-protagonist, Francesca's famous soliloquy on the nature of love reads almost like a parody of the investigation of causes characteristic of didactic poetry:

Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende,
prese costui de la bella persona
che mi fu tolta; e 'l modo ancor m'offende.
Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona,
mi prese del costui piacer sì forte,
che, come vedi, ancor non m'abbandona.
Amor condusse noi ad una morte.
Caina attende chi a vita ci spense.
(*Inf.* 5.100–07)

The text alluded to in Francesca's first line (*Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende*) is, of course, Guido Guinizzelli's famous *canzone* "Al cor gentil." Guinizzelli's poem is yet another text which investigates the nature of phenomena (the phenomenon in this case is love); in it Guinizzelli explains love philosophically by analogy to the workings of the universe, including the sun and stars.⁴⁰ Francesca's appropriation of Guinizzelli's doctrine of love anticipates her later allusions to didactic intertexts like that of Iopas and Boethius. While not suggesting that Guinizzelli's *canzone* was influenced by Iopas' song or any other Vergilian passage, we might argue that Francesca's allusion to "Al cor gentil," when coupled with the later allusions to Dido's banquet and Boethius' *Consolation*, adds to a background of philosophical poetry which sharpens the reason/passion dichotomy of the canto.

Francesca's poetic performance in narrating her adulterous affair has

another interesting parallel to Iopas' song—though one that Dante almost certainly could not have intended. Francesca's story resembles the second song of the Homeric bard Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8, an important source of Vergil's Iopas. This song is also about adultery: Demodocus narrates a tryst between Ares and Aphrodite, and its discovery by Hephaestus. In adapting this song, however, Vergil made the important change of eliminating any reference to mythology or eroticism.⁴¹ Though readers in the Latin West likely knew nothing of Demodocus' song, Servius' commentary hints at the issue of eroticism in poetry recited at heroic banquets, since he judges Iopas' song to be appropriate entertainment for a "still-chaste" queen. Servius goes on to make a contrast with another Vergilian passage, the brief song of the nymph Clymene recited to other nymphs in *Georgics* 4, which tells of the adultery between Ares and Aphrodite.⁴² Francesca's performance, intentionally or not, reinserts the adulterous eroticism of Demodocus' song which Vergil had eliminated in his adaptation of the Homeric bard in Iopas' song.

I have been arguing here that the song of Iopas functions in *Inferno* 5 in a positive manner, as a point of contrast to Francesca's use of philosophical discourse in the narration of her love. It may also be true, however, that the allusion is intended to point to the limitations in Iopas' song from Dante's perspective. Whatever the case, Iopas' song of causes, and its mediation by Boethius in the story of his philosophical career, is yet one more intertext in Francesca's tale of her love and her continuing failure to understand its nature.

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NOTES

1. All citations from the Latin text of Vergil come from the edition of R. A. B. Mynors, *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). The translations, with slight modifications, are from H. Rushton Fairclough's Loeb edition of Vergil's works, *Virgil: Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid*, rev. G. P. Goold, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library 63–64 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999–2000). The secondary literature on Iopas' song has become quite substantial in recent years, and I take this opportunity to list some articles dedicated exclusively to the passage, many of which I will be citing below: Robert D. Brown, "The Structural Function of the Song of Iopas," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 93 (1990): 315–34; Otto Schönberger, "Der Sänger beim Gastmahl (Vergil, *Aeneis* 1,723f.)," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 136 (1993): 298–307; D. A. Little, "The Song of Iopas: *Aeneid* 1.740–46," *Prudentia* 24 (1992): 16–36; Giovanna Garbarino, "Mitici cantori: Iopa nel I libro dell'Eneide," in *Voce di molte acque: Miscellanea di studi offerti a Eugenio Corsini* (Torino: Silvio

Zamorani, 1994): 183–97; T. E. Kinsey, “Iopa,” *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, ed. Umberto Cozzoli et al., 4 vols. (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1984–91); “The Song of Iopas,” *Emerita* 47 (1979): 77–86; “The Song of Iopas (II),” *Emerita* 52 (1984): 69–76; and Charles Segal, “The Song of Iopas in the *Aeneid*,” *Hermes* 99 (1971): 336–49; “Iopas Revisited (*Aeneid* I 740ff.),” *Emerita* 49 (1981): 17–25; “Iopas Again,” *Emerita* 52 (1984): 77–82.

2. For the Vergil-Dante relationship in general I will only suggest some overviews of the subject: Kevin Brownlee, “Dante and the Classical Poets,” *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, ed. Rachel Jacoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 100–06, 118–19; Teodolinda Barolini, *Dante’s Poets: Textuality and Truth in the ‘Comedy’* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984): 201–56; Alessandro Ronconi, “Virgilio,” *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, dir. Umberto Bosco; ed. Giorgio Petrocchi et al. 6 vols. (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970–78); and Edward Moore, *Studies in Dante: First Series: Scripture and Classical Authors in Dante* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896): 166–97, 344–48. For a convenient list of the *Comedy*’s possible allusions to Vergil’s works as collected by earlier commentators, see Robert Hollander, “Le opere di Virgilio nella *Commedia* di Dante,” in *Dante e la ‘bella scola’ della poesia: Autorità e sfida poetica*, ed. Amilcare A. Iannucci (Ravenna: Longo, 1993): 247–343.

3. The Italian text of the *Comedy* comes from *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, ed. and trans. Charles S. Singleton. 3 vols. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970–75).

4. *Esposizioni* I(i):114; text in Giovanni Boccaccio, *Esposizioni sopra la Comedia di Dante*, ed. Giorgio Padoan (Milano: Mondadori, 1965): 43–44; quotation 44. (Vol. 6 of *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, ed. Vittore Branca. 10 vols. to date [1965–]). Iopas’ song and related passages also may have influenced Boccaccio’s portrayal of Dante in the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*. According to Boccaccio, Dante was accustomed to flee crowds and seek solitude “e, quivi speculando, vedere quale spirito muove il cielo, onde venga la vita agli animali che sono in terra, quali sieno le cagioni delle cose, o premeditare alcune invenzioni peregrine o alcune cose comporre. . . .” (*Trattatello* I: 51: text in *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci, 449. [Vol. 3 of *Tutte le opere*]). Both Boccaccio passages are discussed by Francesco Bruni, *Boccaccio: L’invenzione della letteratura mezzana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990): 53–55.

5. The exception is Allen Mandelbaum, who devotes some suggestive comments to the song of Iopas and its source in the *Georgics* as representing Vergil’s flirtation with—and ultimate rejection of—cosmological poetry, in contrast to Dante’s embrace of it (“‘Taken from Brindisi’: Vergil in an Other’s Otherworld,” in *Vergil at 2000: Commemorative Essays on the Poet and His Influence*, ed. John D. Bernard [New York: AMS Press, 1986]: 235–36). Alison Cornish (*Reading Dante’s Stars* [New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000]) refers to *Georg.* 2.475–78 (a source of Iopas’ song; see below) and discusses it as an example of Classical astronomical and agricultural lore, a tradition to which Vergil was associated and which Dante critiques in the canto of the diviners (*Inferno* 20) and in agricultural similes in *Inferno* 24 and 26 (*Dante’s Stars*, chapter 3; the reference to *Georg.* 2.475–78 is on p. 60). Without mentioning Iopas, Cornish notes that “lines 481–82 [of *Georgics* 2] are repeated in *Aeneid* 1.745” (178–79 n. 51; quotation 179; though the repetition in fact occurs at *Aen.* 1.745–46). Though Cornish does not mention Iopas by name, her discussion of the *Georgics* as representative of Vergil’s vast yet incomplete knowledge of sciences such as astronomy is extremely valuable.

6. Other poets mentioned in the *Aeneid* are the Trojan trumpeter Misenus (6.162–74) and Cretheus, a Trojan warrior killed by Turnus (9.774–77). Both poets are singers of martial songs that are summarized in a few lines. And in a mythological digression in Book 10, Cynus, grieving over the fallen Phaeton, sings a song to console himself (10.189–93). The mythical poets Orpheus (6.119–20) and Musaeus (6.667–68) are also mentioned. For these poets in relation to Iopas, see Charles Segal, “Iopas Revisited” 23–24 (who omits Cynus) and Philip R. Hardie, *Virgil’s ‘Aeneid’: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986): 59–60 (who omits Misenus). Hardie (52–66) provides an excellent overview of Iopas’ song and its relationship to traditions of philosophical poetry in antiquity.

7. For the thematic and stylistic similarities of Iopas’ song to Lucretius, see respectively Kinsey, “Iopa” 9; Brown, “Structural Function” 317–18; and Julia T. Dyson, “Dido the Epicurean,” *Classical Antiquity* 15 (1996): 210–14.

8. Hardie, one of the best modern commentators on Iopas' song, cites Boyde in arguing that Dante is the inheritor of the ancient tradition of cosmological poetry: "In Dante's *Commedia* the poet unembarrassedly steps forward as both theologian and philosopher, to present a comprehensive account of the cosmos as then understood" (5).

9. Patrick Boyde, *Dante Philomythes and Philosopher: Man in the Cosmos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). See especially 54–55: "the thirst for knowledge which is aroused in Dante the protagonist is quite often expressed as a desire to know or see the cause." (emphasis Boyde's).

10. Demodocus sings three songs at the banquet of the Phaeacians (*Od.* 8.72–82, 266–366, 499–520). The second song, which narrates an adulterous sexual encounter between Aphrodite and Ares and their discovery by Hephaestus, Aphrodite's husband, will be discussed below. In addition to Demodocus, the bard Phemius entertains the suitors of Penelope in *Odyssey* 1 (vv. 1.153–55, 325ff). Finally, some of the constellations of which Iopas sings derive from the description of the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.483–89. See Robert D. Brown, "The Homeric Background to a Vergilian Repetition (*Aeneid* 1.744 = 3.516)," *American Journal of Philology* 111 (1990): 183–84; and Hardie 63 n. 72 for this relationship.

11. Demodocus was also the model for the song of the poet Orpheus in Apollonius Rhodius' Hellenistic epic, the *Argonautica* (*Arg.* 1.496–511). For the relationship of Iopas' song to Apollonius, see Damien Nelis, *Vergil's 'Aeneid' and the 'Argonautica' of Apollonius Rhodius*. ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 39 (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 2001): 96–112. For more on the sources of Iopas' song, see the literature cited in note 2, above. On the whole *topos* of "didactic dinners" see Peter Toohey, *Epic Lessons: An Introduction to Ancient Didactic Poetry* (London: Routledge, 1996), chapter 9. Another "didactic dinner" that Dante would have known appears in Lucan's *Bellum civile* when Caesar, while feasting with Cleopatra in Egypt, asks the priest Acoreus about the source of the Nile (10.172–92), a question which Acoreus answers at length (193–331). This banquet is partly modeled on the one at Dido's palace, though the extreme luxury of the banquet in Lucan seems to reflect badly on all present, and no music is involved.

12. Two other Vergilian passages have bearing on Iopas' song: the drunken satyr Silenus in *Eclogue* 6 sings a song that is both cosmological and mythological in content (*Ecl.* 6.31ff), and the nymph Clymene in *Georgics* 4 sings a brief mythological song that begins from Chaos (*Georg.* 4.345–47). For Silenus' relationship to Iopas see Toohey 225–27; for more on Clymene's song see below.

13. For the relationship of these lines to Iopas' song, see the comment on 1.742ff. by R. G. Austin (*P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber primus* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971]: 222–23) and Brown, "Structural Function" 325–29.

14. The acquisition of philosophical knowledge is again praised several lines later:

felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas
atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis auri. . .
(*Georg.* 2.490–92)

(Blessed is he who has succeeded in learning the causes of things, has cast beneath his feet all fear and unyielding Fate, and the howl of insatiable Acheron!)

It is worth noting that the subject of the "qui" of line 490 has traditionally been taken to be Lucretius (see the commentary of R. A. B. Mynors, *Virgil: Georgics* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990], 169). Boyde quotes this line at the beginning of his aforementioned discussion of Dante's interest in identifying causes (54).

15. For this echo see R. G. Austin on 6.728 (*P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber sextus* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977], 223); Segal, "Iopas Revisited" 21 and "Iopas Again" 80–81; Garbarino 192; and Kinsey, "Iopas (II)" 74–75. Another verse in Iopas' song—*Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas geminosque Triones* (1.744)—is repeated in *Aen.* 3.516 in a description of Palinurus, the helmsman of Aeneas' fleet, as he surveys the constellations before giving the signal to set sail across the Adriatic to Italy. In

a future study I intend to explore the relationship between this passage, its echo of Iopas' song, and the depiction of Ulysses in *Inferno* 26.

16. See Statius' speech on the origin of souls in *Purgatorio* 25, where vv. 103–04, "Quindi parliamo e quindi ridiam noi; / quindi facciam le lagrime e' sospiri," alludes to *Aen.* 6.733, *hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque* ("Hence their fears and desires, their griefs and joys"; see the commentators listed in Hollander, "Opere di Virgilio" 315). The "carcere caeco" of the earthly body in *Aen.* 6.734 is alluded to in *Inf.* 10.58–59 (Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti's term for Hell) and in *Purg.* 22.103 (here a reference to Limbo, in which Vergil and other virtuous pagans are held; the allusions were pointed out by Moore 347).

17. For the reactions of Christian writers to Iopas' song and Anchises' speech, see Pierre Courcelle, *Lecteurs païens et lecteurs chrétiens de l'Énéide*, 2 vols., Mémoires de l'académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, nouvelle série 4 (Paris: Imprimerie Gauthier-Villars and Diffusion de Boccard, 1984), 1:135–37, 472–89.

18. *Metaph.* 982b 12–17; text and translation in Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Hugh Tredennick. 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library, 271, 287 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1933–35): 1:13.

19. The argument is made by Will Richter ("Lunae labores," *Wiener Studien* 11 [1977]: 98–101), who asserts that the *labores* of these two passages, a word which is usually translated as "toils" or "labors" of the moon or sun, is actually a translation of the word that Aristotle uses to mean "changes" in the appearance of these bodies. The Greek word, *pathēmata*, when used in this way, has a neutral scientific meaning, despite being a derivative of *pathos* ("suffering," "misfortune"). Interestingly, William of Moerbeke in his thirteenth-century translation of the *Metaphysics* into Latin translates *pathēmata* as "passiones," prompting Aquinas in his commentary on the text to explain that the word here means "eclipses" ("de passionibus lunae, videlicet de eclipsi eius") (*In Meta* I, 1, 3, §54; text and commentary in Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*, ed. Raimondo M. Spiazzi [Torino: Marietti, 1950], 17; compare the earlier gloss on the same passage by Aquinas' teacher Albertus Magnus in his own commentary on the *Metaphysics*: "sicut de passionibus lunae secundum mansiones, accessiones et eclipses. . . ." [Bk. 1, tr. 2, cap. 6; Albertus Magnus, *Metaphysica*, ed. Bernhard Geyer (Monasterium Westfalorum [Münster]: Aschendorff, 1960–64): vol. 16, parts 1–2 of *Opera Omnia*, 18 vols. to date (1951–): 16, par. 1:23. Since Dante was familiar with both these texts, this may be significant given his tendency of seeing the heavens as a reflection of human activity. On the importance of the description of the heavenly bodies in these passages by Aristotle and Albert the Great, see Cornish, *Dante's Stars* 22–23. Vergil's use of *labores* in this context influenced subsequent Latin poets, including Lucan (*Bellum civile* 6.505, 7.4) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 7.207–08), both of whom were important sources for Dante. For more examples see Richter 101–02, and Courcelle 1: 135 n. 733.

20. Dante alludes to the passage at *Conv.* 2.15.11, 3.6.12, 14.14 and most explicitly in the *Questio de aqua et terra*, a text often attributed to Dante: ". . . quia per ipsos [effectus] inducimur in cognitionem causarum, ut patet, quia eclipsis solis duxit in cognitionem interpositionis lune, unde propter admirari cepere phylosophari. . . ." (20.61; text in *Questio de aqua et terra*, ed. Francesco Mazzoni, *Opere minori*, 2 vols. [Milano: Riccardo Ricciardi, 1979], 2: 693–880; quotation 2: 764). For the influence of the Aristotelian passage on Dante see Boyle 50–51 and Cornish, *Dante's Stars* 22–23.

21. Boyle 50–51. Cornish has shown how in Dante's major works—*Vita nuova*, *Convivio*, and especially the *Comedy*—this kind of contemplation of the heavens is also intimately related to Dante's devotion to Beatrice, through whom Dante fuses astronomy, philosophy and eroticism. (See Cornish, *Dante's Stars*, chapter 1, especially 15–25, parts of which appeared earlier in "Beatrice and the Astronomical Heavens," *Lectura Dantis* 18–19 [1996]: 20–29).

22. See especially Brown, "Structural Function."

23. See Christine Perkell, "Aeneid 1: An Epic Program," in *Reading Vergil's 'Aeneid': An Interpretive Guide*, ed. Christine Perkell (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999): 48–49. Among ancient commentators, Macrobius in the *Saturnalia* has a character declare the song unsuitable for Dido's banquet: "And suppose that one of those Phaeacians or Carthaginians had tried to blend deep

philosophic discussions with the light table talk; would he not have spoiled the pleasure proper to those gatherings, and would he not—quite rightly—have been laughed at for his pains?” (*Sat.* 7.1.14; translation in Macrobius, *The Saturnalia*, trans. Percival Vaughan Davies. [New York: Columbia University Press, 1969]: 443). Servius’ commentary on Iopas’ song (discussed below) is apparently an answer to the kind of criticism represented by Macrobius. See Austin on *Aen.* 1.742ff (*P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber primus* 222–23) for a discussion of the issue.

24. On this point see Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Dante, Poet of the Desert: History and Allegory in the ‘Divine Comedy’* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979), 165–66.

25. “Structural Function” 331.

26. Brown, “Structural Function” 320–22. Schönberger points to further parallels in vocabulary between Iopas’ song and Dido’s questions (306–07). Brown also notes (“Structural Function” 316–20) that the use of indirect questions to present the subjects of didactic poetry became a regular feature of the genre in antiquity. For other examples that were available to Dante, see the beginning of Vergil’s *Georgics*; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.66ff. (the introduction to Pythagoras’ teachings); and Statius, *Thebaid* 6.355–64 (Apollo singing to the Muses).

27. “Structural Function” 329–32. In the twelfth century John of Salisbury, who approved of Iopas’ song while deploring what he perceived as the luxury and bibulousness of Dido’s banquet, seems to have seen the same kind of contrast: “Long-haired Iopas does not sing the follies and bucolics of lovers but those themes which are appropriate to the elegance of a cultured, and the dignity of a philosophic, company. . . . Feliculously does the learned poet [i.e. Vergil] indicate in the song of the bard the dignity of the ancients who in a social gathering admitted nothing that was not edifying by reason of the instruction it offered in nature or in morals. Desultory conversation followed the applause at Dido’s banquet; this paved the way, and the infatuated queen’s soul drank in long draughts of inevitable and fatal love . . .” (*Policraticus* 8.6.259; translation in *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers: Being a Translation . . . of the ‘Policraticus’ of John of Salisbury*, trans. Joseph B. Pike [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1938], 323).

28. For indications that Dante consulted Servius and incorporated his commentary into the *Comedy*, see Erich von Richthofen, “Traces of Servius in Dante,” *Dante Studies* 92 (1974): 117–28, and the references he collects at 117–18 and notes.

29. The comment by Servius is from *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii*, ed. Georgius Thilo and Hermannus Hagen, 3 vols. (Hildesheim: Goerg Olms, 1961): 1:206–07. The translation is my own. The reference to the song sung “inter nymphas” is to that recited by the nymph Clymene in *Georg.* 4.345–47, a passage that will be discussed below.

30. See the list in Hollander, “Opere di Virgilio” 267.

31. There is yet another gender reversal in *Purgatorio* 30, when Dante-protagonist finally meets Beatrice. During this meeting, Dante plays the role of the Dido of *Aeneid* 4, while Beatrice plays that of Aeneas. At the same time, however, Beatrice becomes a Dido *in bono*, thus correcting both the Vergilian tragic heroine and her descendant, Francesca. On the implications of this meeting for the Dido-Aeneas relationship in the *Aeneid*, see Kevin Brownlee, “Dante, Beatrice, and the Two Departures from Dido,” *MLN* 108 (1993): 9–10, and Peter S. Hawkins, “Dido, Beatrice, and the Signs of Ancient Love,” *The Poetry of Allusion: Virgil and Ovid in Dante’s ‘Commedia’*, ed. Rachel Jacoff and Jeffrey T. Schnapp (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991), 115–25.

32. Boyde 56.

33. Brown, “Structural Function” 322. See also Schönberger 306–07.

34. “Structural Function” 329. Douglas Biow (“Epic Performance on Trial: Virgil’s *Aeneid* and the Power of Eros in Song,” *Arethusa* 27 [1994]: 239) also compares the two performances, concluding that Aeneas’ song, in contrast to that of the philosophical bard, is “a song of declared *casus* (2.10), not *causas*.” The body of Biow’s article (224–37) examines in detail how Aeneas’ narration in Books 2 and 3 is a poetic performance that intensifies Dido’s love for him. He also compares Dido and Aeneas to Francesca and Paolo as characters who “are unaware of the power of their erotic desires when expressed in the language of song” (240–41).

35. See Biow, “Epic Performance,” *passim*.

36. I owe this insight to Kevin Brownlee.

37. Translations of the prose of Boethius' *Consolation* are from *The Consolation of Philosophy*, ed. and trans. P. G. Walsh. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999); quotation 25. Translations of Boethius' verse are my own, using Walsh's translation and the edition of James J. O'Donnell as a guide (*Consolatio Philosophiae*, ed. James J. O'Donnell, 3 vols. [Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Bryn Mawr Commentaries, 1990]). For other possible sources of Francesca's lines, see Singleton's commentary on *Inf.* 5.121–23 (I, pt. 2, 93).

38. Joachim Gruber (*Kommentar zu Boethius 'De Consolatione Philosophiae'* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1978]: 80) compares the passage quoted above (1m2.6–23) to the source of Iopas' song in the *Georgics* as well as to Lucretius, as does Gerard O'Daly (*The Poetry of Boethius* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991]: 41–44, 112–13, 203–04), though O'Daly goes on to argue that it constitutes Boethius' *recusatio* of such scientific subjects in favor of a higher form of philosophical discourse (43–44). See also 4m5, Lady Philosophy's poem about human ignorance of the heavens, which commentators compare to both Lucretius and Vergil, *Georgics* 2.490f (O'Daly 171; Helga Scheible, *Die Gedichte in der 'Consolatio Philosophiae' des Boethius*, Bibliothek der klassischen Altertumswissenschaften N.F. 46 [Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1972]: 146) and to Aristotle's passage in the *Metaphysics*, quoted above, concerning the origins of philosophy (Gigon in Boethius, *Trost der Philosophie*, ed. and trans. Ernst Gegenschatz and Olof Gigon [Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1969]: 299). For the overall importance of causes in the *Consolation*, see Ann W. Astell, *Job, Boethius, and Epic Truth* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994): 49–53.

39. For example, in 4m6 Lady Philosophy bids Boethius to look to the heavens, in which Ursa Maior remains above the horizon:

nec, quae summo vertice mundi
flectit rapidos Ursa meatus,
numquam occiduo lota profundo,
cetera cernens sidera mergi
cupit Oceano tinguere flammās. . . .
(4m6.8–12)

(Nor does the Great Bear, which from the highest tip of the earth bends its rapid movements, ever bathe in deep sunset. Though seeing the other stars sink down, it never wishes to dip its flames in ocean)

Gruber (366) compares verse 12 (*cupit Oceano tinguere flammās*) to the winter suns hastening to dip themselves in the ocean (*quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles*) described in Iopas' song (*Aen.* 1.745) and its source in *Georg.* 2.481.

40. On this aspect of "Al cor gentil" see Cornish, *Dante's Stars* 16–18.

41. It should be noted that both Vergil and Apollonius Rhodius before him were probably influenced by philosophical interpretations of Demodocus' song (see Joseph Farrell, *Vergil's 'Georgics' and the Traditions of Ancient Epic: The Art of Allusion in Literary History* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991]: 258–62, and most recently Tilman Schmit-Neuerburg, *Vergils 'Aeneis' und die antike Homerexegese: Untersuchungen zum Einfluß ethischer und kritischer Homerrezeption auf imitatio und aemulatio Vergils* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999]: 136–43, who follow Georg Nicolaus Knauer, *Die 'Aeneis' und Homer: Studien zur poetischen Technik Vergils mit Listen der Homerzitate in der 'Aeneis'* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1964], 168 n. 2). While the song scandalized some readers in antiquity, others interpreted it allegorically as a representation of the cosmic forces of love (Aphrodite) and strife (Ares), an interpretation that Vergil acknowledges "by substituting Iopas' overt cosmogony for Demodocus' 'allegorical' one" (Farrell 260; cf. Hardie 60–63).

42. Clymene does not limit herself to the story of Ares and Aphrodite; she sings of numerous love affairs between the gods from the beginning of time:

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inter quas curam Clymene narrabat inanem
Volcani, Martisque dolos et dulcia furta,
aque Chao densos diuum numerabat amores.
(*Georg.* 4.345–47)

(Among these Clymene was telling of Vulcan's baffled care, of the wiles and stolen joys of Mars,
and from Chaos on was rehearsing the countless loves of the gods.)

For more on Clymene's song see Hardie 83–84.

The Americanization of Francesca: Dante on Broadway in the Nineteenth Century¹

AMILCARE A. IANNUCCI

The 1800s were *anni mirabiles* for Dante's reception and fame. In Italy Dante and his works were not only vital focal points of nineteenth-century literary criticism, but they were also at the center of the political ideals of the Risorgimento, and fanned the fires of various uprisings for liberty from the revolutions of 1820 to the formation of the United Kingdom of Italy in 1871. In England, H. F. Cary's translation of the *Commedia* (1814) produced an elegant version of Dante's *terza rima* and became an instant bestseller, prized equally by great poets such as Wordsworth and Keats and the common person. Moreover, English Romantic poets such as Byron and Shelley shared Dante's concern with formalism and produced works in *terza rima*, Byron a translation of *Inferno* 5 and Shelley his celebrated *Triumph of Life*. Moreover, both deeply espoused Dante's love of liberty and spent time in Italy where they both felt that Dante was essential to the Italian cause. Still later in the same century, the pre-Raphaelite movement, to which medievalism, purity, the legendary and the fantastical were indispensable, was grounded in Dante and the cult of Beatrice and even Victorianism as a whole can only be understood by a comprehension of the Victorian reception of Dante, in whom a number of Victorian obsessions such as empire, history, and nationalism converge (cf. Milbank). In the United States Dante was cherished by the newly liberated colonists and became a leading cultural icon. He was at the center of a liberal arts education as is evidenced by the long and prestigious tradition of Dante studies at Harvard and the establishment of the Dante Society of America with its celebrated presidents stretching from Ticknor to Longfellow, Lowell to Norton. Dante also had his own

American voice. The verse translation of the *Commedia* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in three volumes (1865–67) brought Dante to the attention of the American public. In fact, so great was the American enthusiasm for Dante at the end of the nineteenth century that a veritable Dante craze erupted (Uricchio and Pearson 95–99). Dante courses, societies and public lectures abounded, incredibly large numbers of women's magazines ran articles devoted to the Italian poet and popular entertainments such as amusement parks and wax works became grounded in him (George T. Bunnell's Bowery dime museum had as its principal attraction a waxworks extravaganza entitled "Dante's Inferno"). Dante, therefore, was a powerful political, formal and cultural symbol of the nineteenth century.

If Dante was a privileged commodity in the nineteenth century, so were his myriad stories, and, of these, none was as privileged in every artistic medium of the century as was Francesca da Rimini. Poets such as Byron translated the tale while others such as Francesco Capozzi redeveloped it in octaves. Short story writers and novelists such as Filippo Mor-dani and Caterina Francheschi-Ferruci produced highly idealized romantic versions of the account. Artists such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Gustave Doré, Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres and Amos Casioli, among many others, painted various aspects of the romance, while sculptors such as Aristide Croisy, Gaetano Motelli, Enrico Pazzi, Auguste Rodin and Alexander Munro fashioned various depictions. Composers too developed musical versions of the Francesca theme. Most prominent among many are Franz Liszt's *Sinfonia di Dante*, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's symphonic fantasy *Francesca da Rimini*, and Charles-Louis-Ambroise Thomas' *Francesca* (Matteini 134–43). However, it was in the dramatic arena of the nineteenth century that the Francesca theme was especially invoked. It is estimated (Flory 59) that the nineteenth century saw the production in Europe alone of some sixty plays on the Francesca theme. Almost every European country and language is represented, including France (Constant Berrier's *Francoise da Rimini* [1827]), Germany (Paul Heyse's *Francesca von Rimini* [1850]), Spain (Hose Echegaray's *El Gran Galeoto* [1882]), England (Stephen Phillip's *Paolo and Francesca* [1899]) and, especially, Italy where in the century from 1801 to 1901 two or three productions of the Francesca story occurred each year, the most famous being Silvio Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini* of 1815 and Gabriele D'Annunzio's *Francesca* of 1901. Nor was this prolific dramatic outpouring of the Francesca story limited

to Europe. In the United States various touring companies, both domestic and foreign, staged Francesca repeatedly (Silvio Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini* was a favorite and was revived several times in New York by Tommaso Salvini in the late nineteenth century), so much so that by 1867 an American review of a French traveling production could assume familiarity with the Francesca character on the part of the American general public (Uricchio and Pearson 97). Moreover, playwrights in the United States also turned to the Francesca theme. Most of the resultant efforts amounted to little more than minor works,² but one, *Francesca da Rimini*, is significant for it not only established Dante on Broadway,³ but also represented a dramatic departure from its European counterparts, nothing less than an Americanization of the Francesca theme. The result, in short, is the American Francesca, and its developer is George Henry Boker (1823–1890), a mid-nineteenth-century poet, statesman and dramatist who, except for a few brief stints abroad, spent most of his life in his beloved America.

Before considering the career of Boker and his development of the Francesca theme, it is first necessary to examine the sources on which any theatrical version of Francesca, including Boker's, could rely. The story of Francesca is first told by Dante whose account is deliberately sparse. In the fifth canto of the *Inferno* (*Inf.* 5. 73–142) the pilgrim encounters the soul of Francesca da Rimini among the damned of the second circle, that of the lustful. She tells him that she is from the land watered by the Po and describes how, one day, in reading the romance of Lancelot for Guinevere, she was overcome by love for Paolo, her husband's brother, and how that love brought her and Paolo to death by her husband's hand and to their subsequent position among the damned. The encounter with Francesca is a lyric high point of the *Commedia*, and in it Dante displays a delicate balance between human understanding of, and compassion for, Francesca's adulterous love, and divine condemnation of it. On the one hand, the pilgrim clearly identifies with Francesca's tale and commiserates with her in the extreme, claiming that "her afflictions move [him] to tears of sorrow and of pity" (*Inf.* 5. 116–17). Moreover, at her story's conclusion, the pilgrim is so overcome by grief that his body faints and "falls as a dead body falls" (*Inf.* 5. 141–42). On the other hand, Dante is a stern moralist and displays throughout the encounter a fierce moral purpose in keeping with the high moral tone of his poem. That is why the story is stripped of everything except its bare essentials. The focus is on Francesca,

and even though she tries to justify her illicit passion by appealing to the conventions of courtly love, Dante will have none of it. Francesca, for Dante, is in the after life what she was in this life, a blind sinner who surrendered her reason to the overwhelming power of desire. She is, to use the phrase of that most astute of English Dante scholars, Alan Charity, a post-figuration of her earthly self. The perverseness of Francesca's love is what condemns her and Dante nicely underscores this point by having her triple anaphora of love as an excuse for her actions end with one word, a word which summarizes Dante's and Christian doctrine's view of the consequences of her surrender of reason to passion, death.

The earliest commentators turned to the story in order to flesh out the bare details of Dante's terse account. Most merely provide information on the identity of the tale's three participants. So, Pietro Alighieri, Lana, L'Ottimo, all identify Francesca as the daughter of Guido da Polenta of Ravenna, the wife of Johannis (Pietro), alternately named Gianni "ciotto," (Lana), Gianciotto (Boccaccio, L'Ottimo), or Lanciotto (Falso Boccaccio, Buti, Landino, and later commentators such as Vellutello, Daniello, Lombardi, Portirelli, Costa, Rossetti),⁴ son of Malatesta da Verucchio of Rimini. They also include that she was the adulterous lover of Paolo, Gianciotto's brother, and that Gianciotto discovered the adulterous affair and killed both.

Boccaccio is the exception. Being the inveterate storyteller that he was, Boccaccio was primarily interested in plot. He therefore embroidered the story greatly and fashioned a most curious tale which unfolds in five principal scenes: first, Gianciotto, the capable but deformed son of Malatesta da Verrucchio is given in marriage to Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta to broker a peace treaty between the two warring families; second, Gianciotto sends his handsome young brother Paolo to Ravenna to participate in the marriage by proxy; third, Francesca who thinks that she is marrying Paolo, falls in love with him and is dismayed to learn that she is actually Gianciotto's wife; fourth, when Gianciotto goes off to some nearby town as podestà, the lovers began to meet; fifth, Gianciotto, on being informed of the affair by a servant, returns, surprises the lovers (Paolo tries to exit by a trapdoor but is caught by a fold in his jacket) and kills them, leaving them to be buried the next day in a single tomb. Throughout, the emphasis is on the details of the story. True to form, Boccaccio recasts the simple tale as a short story, probably inventing the whole thing. The marriage proxy and single tomb he quite evidently

borrowed from Tristan and Iseult. The rest (the figure of the informer, the deformed husband, the imagery of the net-like trap) he probably took from the illicit love of Venus and Mars first told by Homer in Book 8 (266–369) of the *Odyssey* and retold by Ovid in Book 4 (169–189) of the *Metamorphoses* (cf. Iannucci 94 ff.). Thus did Boccaccio string out the tale and, in direct opposition to Dante, neither celebrates the lyric pathos of the lovers nor condemns their moral evil. Once established, however, these two strands of Dante and Boccaccio would affect all subsequent retellings of the tale. In addition, in the case of Boker, two nineteenth-century sources, composed barely a year apart, were also at work.

One of the most popular dramas of the early nineteenth century was Silvio Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini* (1815). A romantic drama, the play unfolds in five acts. In Act I Lanciotto is distressed at Francesca's desire to return to Ravenna and ascribes the decision to her hatred of Paolo, who had killed her brother in combat. Act II recounts the corresponding decision of Paolo to leave Rimini, believing that he is hated by the woman he loves. Act III has the lovers proclaim their mutual love, although they sense that their love presents a threat to their sense of duty, and ends with Lanciotto's realization that Francesca loves Paolo. In Act IV Paolo maintains that his love is innocent, but Lanciotto is enraged and has his brother arrested. Act V presents the escape of Paolo, his reuniting with Francesca, Lanciotto's discovery of them, and his murder of the lovers. The drama is as sparse as Dante's staging of the lovers. It is, in fact, classical, in the sense of Alfieri, and relies for its appeal on observing the rule of the unities. But the fact that the lovers never do anything wrong, and the rather one-dimensional portrayal of Lanciotto, detracts from the play's overall dramatic strength. This play may have affected Boker's treatment and may have been the filter through which he read Dante. For, like Dante's tale, and Pellico's impassioned retelling, Boker's *Francesca*, as we shall see below, captures the lyric intensity of the lovers. At the same time, it also enlarges greatly on Pellico's depiction of Lanciotto to create a far more tragic figure who has a leading place in the pantheon of all such characters.

The Story of Rimini (1816) by English critic and poet James Leigh Hunt is regarded by many as a precursor to English Romantic poetry. The work, a long poem divided into four cantos, recounts how Francesca's father, Guido Novello da Polenta conceived a plot to have her marry Giovanni (Launcelot) Malatesta of Rimini. Accordingly, she was led to

believe that Giovanni's younger and handsome brother, Paolo, who was sent as a proxy to the marriage, was alike his brother in all respects. Francesca takes a liking to Paolo and discovers that her husband, Giovanni, is not what she expected. Both Paolo and Francesca waver between their mutual attraction and their sense of duty. Giovanni discovers their secret, challenges Paolo to a duel and kills him. Francesca dies of a broken heart. Both are conveyed to Ravenna for burial in a single tomb and Guido loses his wits. Pivotal to the plot of the poem is a single recurrent detail which forms a frame for the drama—the deception of Francesca by her father. This deception lends an added plot twist in the manner of Boccaccio, whose eye for story details is shared by Boker. In fact, Boker borrows the deception of the father and fashions it into a key controlling element in his play. For, like Leigh Hunt's Guido, Boker's character is revealed early on as a manipulator, and his lies and deceit become the principal agents through which the drama is set in motion. At the same time, however, as Boker had attempted to improve dramatically on Pellico by retrieving Dante, so does he with Leigh Hunt in the manner of Boccaccio. This he does by situating the father's deception within dramatic encounters both with an attending cardinal and with Francesca. In this manner, the deception is given far greater dramatic weight as a detail worthy in its own right and as a catalyst for the unfolding drama.

George Henry Boker⁵ was born in Philadelphia on October 6, 1823 (Fig. 1). His father, Charles S. Boker, was a substantial Philadelphia merchant who conducted a successful business in "boots and bonnets." In 1842 Boker senior sold his business at a handsome profit to assume the management of the Girard Bank, one of the pioneers of American finance and one of the oldest banks in the United States. Boker's childhood was one of simplicity and restraint, in keeping with his Quaker roots, albeit one also of considerable luxury. Among his boyhood acquaintances was the poet Charles Godfrey Leland, the author-to-be of the *Hans Breitmann Ballads*, and a lifelong close friend of Boker. With him Boker shared not only the activities of youth, especially a fondness for riding, but also a keen interest in literature. Legends, such as Don Quixote, were favorites and the earliest boyhood fictions which Boker encountered were "stories of chivalry and fairy-land." During Boker's sixth and seventh years he was put in the care of a private tutor at home and in 1831 he was sent to a local school run by Sears S. Walker and later by B. P. Hunt, a liberal and enthusiastic teacher with a wide knowledge of foreign literature. Here

Boker excelled at the curriculum, which included natural philosophy, chemistry, French, Latin and drawing and here, under Hunt's aegis, he began his universalistic bias in literature, reading widely and cultivating a taste for the romantic, including the novels of Cooper, Bulwer-Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii*, Irving's *Sketch Book*, the poetry of Scott and Byron, *The Arabian Nights* and northern mythologies. At the same time he also developed an early love of the stage, fostered by his father, who took him "to every place of amusement," where Boker became acquainted with many stage actors and their careers. In 1838 Boker, at the age of fifteen, entered Princeton University, or the College of New Jersey, as it was then called. In spite of the pious conservatism of the strict 'Old School' Presbyterian theologians who then held sway, and a very limited curriculum, which rated mathematics and the study of scripture most highly, Boker pursued a liberal arts education more to his liking. He accordingly immersed himself not only in French and German, considered tools of the devil, but also English, including the "Lake School of Poetry," Byron, Shelley and Wordsworth, the Elizabethans, especially Shakespeare and the dramatists, the poets and dramatists of the Restoration and the English lyricists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He also developed close relationships with two liberal professors, James Alexander, Professor of Rhetoric and Philosophy, and Albert Todd, Professor of Architecture. The latter's home was open to Boker and here he engaged in discussions that were liberal, eye-opening and a far cry from the prevalent religious pietism of the college. Moreover, although at Princeton "all physical exercises were sternly discouraged as leading to sin," Boker became an accomplished athlete, the best boxer, fencer and dancer in the College. Regular trips to Philadelphia and New York also kept alive his love of the theater and, in his senior year, Boker's first literary attempts were published in the *Nassau Literary Monthly*, a college publication which he had founded and which possessed decidedly elevated taste. From February, 1842 to November, 1843, Boker contributed fourteen articles and poems, including three sonnets, Boker's preferred literary form (*Sonnets*), and five essays, including two translations, one "A Fragment from *Beowulf*."

Upon graduation in June of 1842, Boker was confronted by what form his future would take. His parents wanted him to enter his father's business or accept a position with the Girard Bank. They even secured for Boker, while he was still at Princeton, the offer of the post of Secretary to the United States' Ambassador to Vienna. But Boker disliked both busi-

ness and banking and wanted to write more than anything else. He therefore agreed to the study of law as a delaying tactic and for two years he pursued legal studies in a most desultory manner, all the while broadening his familiarity with literature both domestic and foreign. This career impasse was finally brought to a close in June of 1844, when Boker married Julia Riggs, a woman of intelligence and grace who fostered her husband's literary goals and who gave him three children, only one of whom, a son named George, lived to adulthood. Boker, rejuvenated after a six-month honeymoon in Europe, returned to a new home in Philadelphia, provided by his father, and a new lease on life determined by his writing, his devotion as a family man and his prominent place within Philadelphia society, both literary and non.

The decade from 1848 to 1858 was Boker's most prolific, and all of his major stage works were written during this period.⁶ In 1848 Boker released his first book of poems, *The Lesson of Life* and in the same year he wrote his first tragedy *Calaynos*, which was first performed without Boker's knowledge in London in 1849 and subsequently produced in several American cities. The play, written, as most of Boker's plays (the exceptions are *The Bankrupt* and *The World A Mask*), in blank verse, sounds many of the playwright's favorite themes, especially the loss of innocence and the corruption of society, and, in it, Boker displays a dramatic talent for the development of strong characterization, especially that of the tortured Moorish-tainted Spaniard, Calaynos. His next play, *Anne Boleyn*, likewise a tragedy, was published in 1850 but was never produced. A historical drama, based largely on Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*, the play is exceptional for the character of Anne herself and her dramatically charged speeches, especially the great court-room speech after her condemnation. Boker's next two plays, also written in 1850, were comedies. *The Betrothal*, set in Renaissance Italy, tells the story of star-crossed lovers who are united at the play's end. It proved to be an outstanding success, being produced five times in Philadelphia and New York and bringing the author considerable royalties. *The World A Mask* is a social satire which lampoons the tendency of society to elevate the mere appearance of respectability above true virtue. It is not a particularly adept theatrical vehicle, suffering from a hopelessly convoluted plot. Like Boker's two later comedies, *The Widow's Marriage* (produced in 1852) and *The Bankrupt* (produced 1855), it underscores that Boker had a superficial

understanding of comedy which, with the exception of *The Betrothal*, was not Boker's forte.

Tragedy, however, was, and in his next two plays Boker achieved his greatest successes and his most enduring works. *Leonor de Guzman* was completed in 1852 and produced in Philadelphia in 1853. Based loosely on Spanish history, it tells the story of Leonor, mistress of King Alfonso XII of Castile, who, upon the latter's death, is pitted in a battle of wits with Maria of Portugal, legal wife of the King, to establish her eldest son Enriqu  as legitimate heir. The play represents the maturing of Boker's talent as a tragedian and abounds in strong characters and dramatic intensity. Leonor and Maria are not presented as virtuous or vicious, but as real human beings, each with her own responsibilities, who have suffered greatly and who tragically end in death or unrequited revenge. And the essence of the tragedy lies in Boker's dramatic understanding and presentation of the nature of society and the demands placed on certain individuals. These themes and these strong characters Boker would take to perfection in *Francesca da Rimini*. The play was written in a frenetic nineteen-day period in 1853 and first produced in New York in 1855, with E. L. Davenport, who was then at the height of his career, as Lanciotto.

Boker, of course, had long been familiar with Dante and with the Francesca story. His association with both had begun early, while he was at Princeton, and it was an association which he resumed frequently. In fact, in a sonnet, dated February 20, 1852 (*Sonnets* 50), that is, one year before he began work on the play, Boker wrote as follows:

Tonight I walked with the grim Florentine
Through all the woes of his material Hell.

As we shall shortly see, Boker knew of the Francesca story both from Dante and from Boccaccio's commentary. Moreover, it is probable that he had seen, while on his honeymoon in Europe, Silvio Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini* (Boker, like Pellico, names his main protagonist Lanciotto), for it was not only staged in Italy repeatedly throughout this time, but also played frequently in other European countries. But, although Boker knew the tale well, he retold it in a dramatic fashion that was unique among all Francesca plays, both those, such as Pellico's, which had preceded the Boker version, and those, such as Marion Crawford's and Gabriele D'Annunzio's, which were to follow.

The time of the action is, according to the stage directions, about 1300,⁷ and the play unfolds in five acts. Act I serves as exposition, introducing the arranged marriage, the deceit of Francesca as to the deformity of Lanciotto, her husband-to-be, the journey of Paolo to Ravenna and his wooing of Francesca for his brother, and the ever-present taunts of the court jester Pepe, a character totally of Boker's invention. Act II belongs to Francesca, and in it we see her transformation from a charming and dutiful daughter into a woman who is aware of the cruel deceit, both Lanciotto's and her own, which the marriage has created. Act III sees the first encounter between Lanciotto and Francesca and there is an abundance of irony as Lanciotto suddenly feels that he can love and be loved and Francesca realizes that she must practice deceit in order to appear to love. Act IV begins with Lanciotto's dream of love, moves through his doubts of ever being loved and ends with his leaving Rimini to do battle. Act V contains the betrayal of Paolo and Francesca by Pepe, who is killed by Lanciotto, Lanciotto's return and his murder of the lovers.

As the above details reveal, Boker relies heavily on the Boccaccio story for plot development. Thus, the deformed husband, the marriage proxy and the informer are all elements common to Boccaccio and many subsequent retellers of the tale. These elements Boker combines with others such as the father's, and, to a lesser degree, Paolo's deception of Francesca with respect to Lanciotto's deformity, to create a dramatic rendering of the lovers' tale which relies heavily on its effective marshalling of plot details. At the same time, Boker's treatment of the material is decidedly dantean. This is evident on two important fronts. First, as Dante, in *Inferno* 5, explicitly links love, war and politics through the underlying theme of unbridled passion (Iannucci), so does Boker keep constantly before us a connection between the madness of unregulated passion in love and the madness of unregulated passion in war. There is thus a political framework to the play. In fact, politics and warfare ground the play's beginning (as Malatesta tells his son Lanciotto at the play's opening, politics and warfare are responsible for the duplicitous marriage between Francesca and Lanciotto: "I have made her hand / The price and pledge of Guido's future peace" [Act. 1, sc. 2]), and the play's end (Lanciotto in the closing speech of the play makes it clear that unregulated passion is the cause of his actions as lover and as warrior: "I will to the wars, / And do more murders to eclipse this one." [Act 5, sc. 3]). In addition, politics and warfare drive the character of Lanciotto and lend dramatic depth to the psychological

tension which is evident in him as warrior and which inevitably accounts for his actions as lover. For it is war that has made him both capable of genuine pity ("I pity those who fought and bled and died, / Before the armies of this Ghobelin." [Act 1, sc. 1]), but also capable of the raw madness of revenge:

I'd see Ravenna burn,
Flame into heaven, and scorch the flying clouds;
I'd choke her streets with ruined palaces;
I'd hear the women scream with fear and grief,
As I have heard the maids of Rimini. (Act 1, sc. 2)

Secondly, Boker's very treatment of the lovers is dantean. For while, as in Dante, there is strong condemnation of Francesca's and Paolo's illicit love, that condemnation is somewhat mitigated by the lyric celebration of passionate love and the heroic qualities of the lovers. Thus, in Boker, Francesca is not only loyal to her native city of Ravenna and her father's wishes, but also is aware, even when confronted by Lanciotto's deformity, of the intense ardor he has for her love and is stung by the pain that her refusal may be doing "the noblest heart of all." Moreover, even though Paolo burns with love for Francesca from the moment of their first encounter, he sublimates that love to the higher love he has for his brother and earnestly woos Francesca for his brother, even concealing his deformity. But, although respecting the main dantean elements of the tale, especially the political dimension, Boker goes beyond Dante and all other dramatizers of the tale, to create a piece of theater that is grounded in Boker's uniquely American dramatization, cultural bias and staging.

The basis of Boker's American version of the Francesca tale is anchored in the main character of the play, Lanciotto, and Boker's "sublime" understanding of his tortured soul. Not only does he determine the major action of the play, but he is, in Boker's sensitive portrayal, the play's preeminent tragic figure (so much so that Lawrence Barrett suggested changing the title of the play to "Lanciotto" for his 1882 revival [Kitts 95]). His deformity is front and center, and for it Boker undoubtedly drew upon a number of models. Already in the early commentators, deformity played an important role. In addition, Boker was familiar with Shakespeare's *Richard III*, although this drama's principal protagonist and Lanciotto share little in common, except their deformity. Unlike Richard, Lanciotto is not "inwardly deformed" (Ackerman 7, 120). More impor-

tantly, Boker was influenced by two models almost contemporaneous with his play. Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* had appeared in 1831, at roughly the same time therefore that Boker was cultivating a love for foreign literature. The novel's hero, of course, is the "weird half-man, half-gargoyle, Quasimodo" (Dahl, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* 4). The expansive description of the ugliness of Quasimodo (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame* 49), when he first appears in the novel, together with the fact that he is tortured by the dream of human affection and the reality of unrequited love, accords well with the ugly and tortured Lanciotto. Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* was published in 1851, just a few years before Boker wrote *Francesca da Rimini*. Once again, its hero, Captain Ahab is deformed (cf. *Moby Dick* 167–77), but more to the point, Ahab's deformity is linked to his singular obsession, an obsession which leads to his death and the death of those around him (cf. Ackerman 120–21). There is no direct evidence that Boker based his dramatic representation of Lanciotto on either Quasimodo or Ahab, but much in their physical, psychological and emotionally tortured selves seems to suggest that they contributed greatly to the way in which Boker understood and cast the deformed Lanciotto.

Lanciotto's deformity is a controlling concept: he is aware of his "gnarled, blighted trunk" and extremely self-conscious of his marriage to one far more beautiful ("I, the great twisted monster of the wars, / The brawny cripple, the herculean dwarf, / The spur of panic and the butt of scorn—/ I be a bridegroom!") [Act 1, sc. 2]). He thus has a vivid sense of reality, but this does not stop him from the dream of love ("'. . . 'tis sweet, / Sweeter than slumber to the lids of pain, / To fancy that a shadow of true love / May fall on this God-stricken mould of woe, / From so serene a nature" [Act 4, sc. 1]) and in the end, when his appeal to the lovers to deny their love has failed, he, in response to the honor of family and the "laws of Italy" kills that which he loves. As Lanciotto confesses the murder of his brother to his father in the closing scene of the play, the tragedy becomes intense as he realizes what he has done: "I loved him more than honor—more than life—" (Act 5, sc.3). The play's ultimate tragedy therefore arises from Lanciotto's suffering and in him we catch a glimpse of the eternal longing and hopeless disappointment of us all. As John Calvin Metcalf notes (58) of *Francesca da Rimini*, in comparing Boker's play with those of Phillips and D'Annunzio, "the American's is the most sanely human."

Boker's development of Lanciotto's character is unique. All other plays which deal with the Francesca theme make Francesca the center of the play's dramatic action. In fact, the role of Francesca in the nineteenth-century theatrical repertoire became the starring vehicle for many of the leading actresses of the day. Silvio Pellico's Francesca was made popular first by Carlotta Marchionni and then by Adelaide Ristori, who was a girl of fourteen when she first played the role (Ristori 195).⁸ Marion Crawford wrote his *Francesca da Rimini* for Sarah Bernhardt and Gabriele D'Annunzio his for Eleonora Duse.⁹ In Boker, Francesca, to be sure, is still important, but she now cedes primacy of dramatic place to Lanciotto. Boker, therefore, "is the first dramatist to conceive the pathos of the deformed husband, Lanciotto" (Spiller 1002), and by shifting the emphasis from Francesca to Lanciotto, Boker creates a version of the play that has less to do with passionate love than it does with a cruel and uncaring society with which an individual of greatness, such as Lanciotto, is hopelessly at odds. An acute awareness of society, therefore—its fickleness, its apathy, its preoccupation with appearance rather than reality, its demands, its controlling obligations and constraints—is thus culled from Boker's first-hand experience of America's changing social elite in the nineteenth century, and converted into a dramatic treatment of the Francesca material which "recognizes that callous society, not fate, was the agent of the tragedy" (Spiller 1002).

Moreover, not only is *Francesca da Rimini* a general indictment of society, but it is also a specific critique of social and political events contemporaneous with Boker's nineteenth-century America. The play, in fact, establishes Boker as a man "in revolt against his own environment" (Spiller 1001). This environment consisted of the American dream, an egalitarian ideal according to which "life should be better and richer for all" (Adams 404). The dream was dominated by economic boom and political expansion. At the time Boker wrote *Francesca* the economy of the fledgling United States was on solid ground. The financial crisis of 1837 was in the past, that of 1857 in the future. The intervening score of years is a period well documented (North and Thomas 227 ff.) as an era of unprecedented economic growth and enormous wealth invested in the hands of a few financially elite families of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, such as the Rushes and the Ridgways, families with which Boker was well acquainted and families rife with crass materialism. Mrs. Rush, who was the wife of the famous Dr. Rush and the focus of Phila-

delphia society, never allowed her guests to forget that her house contained sixty thousand dollar's worth of furniture and, in her rooms, as in the rooms of other Philadelphia icons of wealth, "there was annually," as Leland remarked, "much more money expended for bouquets than for books" (Bradley 38). In the political arena, manifest destiny was rampant in America and dictated expansionist policy both at home and abroad. Texas was annexed and California and the southwest wrested from Mexico shortly before the composition of *Francesca* and the addition of this vast territory to the American Republic was seen as part of the natural process of manifest destiny (Nevins and Commager 195). In the same period, America considered the possibility of incorporation of its northern and southern neighbors. In 1848 there had been wild talk of annexing Ireland and Sicily and in 1854, according to the Ostend Manifesto (Morrison and Commager 634) America offered to buy Cuba from Spain, thus affording Spain the revenue to "become a centre of attraction for the travelling world . . . and bring forth a vastly increased quantity of choice wines." Should Spain refuse, America stated its justification in wrestling the island nation from its European parent. In the America of the 1850s patriotism was at an all-time high and various political groups, such as the 'Young America' movement within the Democratic party, extolled the ideals of service and duty. This was a time when the human was defined by the extent of material possessions or political accomplishments alone. It was not a time that favored literary activity and writers like Boker. As his friend Leland wrote years later: "at that time the position of the literary man or the scholar, with the exception of a very few brilliant magnates, who had 'made money,' was in the United States not an enviable one" (Bradley 30).

This environment and its values Boker excoriates in *Francesca da Rimini*. The controlling scene, as Paul C. Sherr has shown (361–71), is the short first scene of Act III which does nothing to advance the dramatic argument of the play and which could be interpreted as absolutely superfluous were it not for its political message. This political message is delivered by Boker's spokesperson, Pepe, the jester, and throughout the scene he is employed in a most ironic manner to reinforce Boker's scathing criticism. For Pepe is the theatrical alter ego of Boker and is simultaneously "the uninhibited artist refusing to be intimidated by the existing order" (Sherr 369) and, as he styles himself, "the very firebrand of truth," (Act 3, sc. 1), inspired by "some mystic power" (Act 3, sc.1) and "ready for martyrdom,

for stake and fire,” (Act 3, sc. 1) in the service of truth and reform of the world. Before Lanciotto, in his review of contemporary society, Pepe parades its main ills (Act 3, sc. 1):

Spread our new doctrine, like a general plague,
Talk of man’s progress, and development,
Wrongs of society, the march of mind,
The Devil, Doctor Faustus, and what not;
And, lo! this pretty world turns upside down,
All with a fool’s idea.

“A fool’s idea” is thus Boker’s assessment of his native America, where rampant expansionism, crass materialism and the devaluation of the role in society of the sensitive artist prevailed. Moreover, Pepe goes beyond this brief searing indictment at the beginning of Act 3 and shapes a contemporary social and political critique which abounds in Americanisms. So, Pepe (Act 3, sc. 1) at first defines the American dream, a “simple commonwealth” of

. . . no families, no Malatesti,
Strutting about the land, with pedigrees
And claims bequeathed them by their ancestors;
No fellows vapouring of their royal blood;
No one to seize a whole inheritance,
And rob the other children of the earth.
By Jove! You should not know your fathers even!
I’d have you spring like toadstools, from the soil—
Mere sons of women—nothing more nor less—
All base-born, and all equal.

He then goes on to attack the kind of control that members of this commonwealth exercise, especially the refusal of parents, like those of Boker, to encourage the “aspiring merit” of their children and the enforcement of mercantile and political ideals. Moreover, in this simple commonwealth, the very basis of society, marriage, is under attack for it has become debased, “love’s purgatory, / Without a heaven beyond,” a contract with “the good old race of women [which] has declined / Into a sort of male stupidity” (Act 3, sc.1). But Boker’s greatest opprobrium is reserved for the political ideals and practices of nineteenth-century America. Here Pepe is made to mirror ironically the political reality of American manifest

destiny, with its belief in the superiority of its vision and the moral certainty of its position. Pepe describes himself (Act 3, sc. 1) as “a politician / A wrongs-of-man man” who has “an itching to reform the world,” and [whom] “Heaven has picked out to teach my fellow-man.” And, like nineteenth-century America, Pepe is awash with political fervor (Act 3, sc. 1): “Noise it about the earth, and let it stir / The sluggish spirits of the multitudes.” So well developed is Boker’s civic critique that he even includes a passing reference to the contemporary political troubles in Hungary and America’s response (Sherr 367–68). For the Hungary of Boker’s time, like that of Dante’s, was embroiled in military tumult. The Hungarian Republic, in fact, which was established in 1848 with the revolt of the Hungarians against their Austrian overlords, was brought to a speedy end by an invasion of Austrian, Serb and Russian troops in 1849. Many politicians in the United States rallied to the support of the Hungarian cause and called for a suspension of diplomatic relations with Austria. In 1851, the leader of the rebellion, Louis Kossuth, was brought to America, but a speech which he made in Philadelphia calling for war proved to be his undoing. Slaveholders, isolationists and patriots such as the Irish Catholics combined to discredit him for his violation of the laws of hospitality. But the Hungarian situation continued to haunt the conscience of America and in *Francesca* Boker, in spite of the prevalent apathy and intolerance in America, lashes out at Austrian policy towards Hungary. Once again the barb comes from Pepe in answer to Lanciotto’s query as to what he thinks “of the Emperor’s aim / Towards Hungary.” Pepe replies: “A most unwise design / . . . / Because the Emperor has more need of wisdom / Than the most barren fool of wit.” (Act 3, sc. 1). Beginning then with a general censure of American society, Boker proceeds to a detailed political reproach aimed at American political ideals and practices.

If *Francesca da Rimini* is American in dramatization and cultural bias, it is even more so in its staging. For Boker tones down the pageantry of the play, a feature that was to be the undoing of D’Annunzio’s series of great *tableaux vivants*, and focuses instead on characterization, especially psychological motivation, and the realistic details of practical drama. For although Lanciotto is the dramatic center of attention, the other characters are by no means reduced to mere pastiches. In fact, Boker has created four strong and well-developed main characters, Lanciotto, Francesca, Paolo and Pepe. It is their interaction which makes or breaks the play. Boker’s *Francesca da Rimini*, therefore, represents a turning-point in Amer-

ican stage and acting history. No longer would a play's success or failure rest on the head of one starring character, as in all other versions of the Francesca tale, but would require the ensemble talents of the entire cast. Moreover, it would also require painstakingly careful attention paid to its many dramatic details which called for realistic presentation.

In this concern for realism and naturalism Boker stood at the forefront of his theatrical times. For living in an era when stock and trite melodramas, such as John A. Stone's *Metamora* (1829) and Robert Montgomery Bird's *The Gladiator* (1831), were gradually giving way to more realistic comedies and tragedies, such as *The Banker's Daughter* by Bronson Howard (1878), and *Margaret Fleming* by James Herne (1890), Boker foreshadows the realism of the American theater that marks the first decades of the twentieth century. This realism was in evidence first in Europe from the middle of the nineteenth century. Drama was now turning to science for inspiration, especially the Darwinian belief in heredity and environment¹⁰ and now sought, in the words of the French playwright Jean Julien, to present a "slice of life, put on the stage with art." Romantic idealism thus was giving way to life-like depiction. New themes, all centered on the stuff of everyday life, now emerged, such as the struggle of the individual to overcome fate, the frailty of the human spirit, and the growing complexities of the urban environment. This trend is best represented by Ibsen's tragedies, beginning with *A Doll's House* in 1879. But, American playwrights too were affected by these developments and were slowly developing more realistic theatrical vehicles. The American theater, in fact, from 1870 to 1890, represents a period of ferment which simultaneously celebrates the romantic and the melodramatic and foreshadows the newly emerging realism. Moreover, Boker himself best represents this period, being part of the American romantic tradition, and also standing apart from it (Gallagher 187). For he had disdained the romantic and heroic themes of national idealism and had shaped tragedies that are centered on the human and the tragic crises of personality. For him the key to dramatic production lay "in an exciting story supported by strong characterizations" (Gallagher 214) not in grafting a romantic ideal onto literature. Accordingly, he had focused on psychological and spiritual issues and had produced dramas of social seriousness and responsibility, in sharp contrast to the romantic melodramas of his times. He also, as we shall presently see, devoted considerable energy to ensuring that his

dramas be enacted realistically, in all of the details pertaining to their practical staging.

It is interesting to note that the 1855 production of Boker's *Francesca da Rimini*, although garnering first-rate reviews, did not enjoy great popular appeal, being limited to runs of eight nights in New York and four in Philadelphia. This was due, no doubt, to the leading actor E. L. Davenport whose performance as Lanciotto the American drama critic, William Winter, described as "unimaginative, mechanical and melodramatic" (316) and whose stage adaptation of the play missed entirely the interactive dynamic of Boker's characters and the kind of dramatic realism which Boker had intended. It would be twenty-seven years before *Francesca* would find the kind of attention to characterization and practical staging that it deserved.

It is not known what first drew the great American actor, Lawrence Barrett, to *Francesca* in general, and the role of Lanciotto, in particular, but William Winter certainly encouraged Barrett's involvement (Winter 316–17) and by 1882 Barrett had a copy of the play which he cut and prepared for the stage. At this time Boker was fifty-nine years old and was hopelessly disappointed, having all but abandoned a literary career. To be sure, external events had intervened: a lengthy lawsuit, which was brought against his father after the latter's death in 1858 and which alleged fraudulent dealings, involved him incessantly¹¹ until it was settled in Boker's favor in 1873; the Civil War had required his services and he not only served as Secretary of the Union League, a propagandistic association loyal to the northern cause, from 1862 to 1871, but also wrote many patriotic poems which he published in 1864 as *Poems of the War*; service to his country then consumed him and he served as Minister first to Turkey and then to Russia from 1871 to 1878. But Boker was also a dejected literary man, having seen his plays sadly neglected and having reaped little financial gain or literary recognition from them. Barrett's interest, in fact, wrung the following sad reflection out of Boker in 1882: "Why didn't I receive this encouragement years ago? Then I might have done something" (Bradley 143). But although Boker lamented his lack of literary success, he was won over by Barrett's initiative¹² and assumed a most active role in *Francesca*'s 1882 restaging.

The basis of this role is Boker's attention to realistic characterization and staging. For among Boker's papers, preserved in Princeton's University Library, is a copy of Barrett's stage script which contains several of the

notes the playwright wrote prior to the revival of *Francesca* in 1882. As the script indicates, to Barrett is due a scaled down version of the play from 2800 lines to fewer than 1500. Acts 1 and 2 are limited to one scene each, the opening scene of Act 3 is omitted altogether and the closing scene of the play, which is made Act 6, takes place in Francesca's bedroom rather than the garden. Moreover, Barrett all but eliminates the minor characters Guido and Ritta and saves the final tragedy for Lanciotto who stabs himself after the murder of Paolo and Francesca, although no such act was part of the original play. But, as Boker's notes indicate, he alone is responsible for the heightened sense of realism, in the staging of both character and other details, which helped make the 1882 revival such a success. As Claude R. Flory has demonstrated, most of these thirteen notes deal with the attitudes and relationships of the principal characters of the play. The majority concern Lanciotto. One such accompanies the appearance of Lanciotto at the arrival of Guido and his Ravenna entourage at Rimini. When Guido complains that he does not see his son-in-law, Lanciotto strides forth and exclaims: "I am here, my Lord." Boker's note is illuminating: "This entrance of Lanciotto should be very impressive. As he says, 'I am here, my Lord,' everyone should gaze on him, making him the center of all things" (Flory 60). A similar note deals with the initial encounter between Lanciotto and Francesca. He, confessing that he has a share in her embarrassment, is taken aback when she denies it. Boker's note reads: "This horror of Lanciotto must not be too openly expressed. It must seem rather like maiden shyness at her novel situation. Else he would be too easily convinced of her regard for him, and what follows would seem to be stupid in him and unnatural in fact" (Flory 60). But the apex of Boker's concern for greater realism in character portrayal concerns Barrett's staging of the climatic boudoir scene between Paolo and Francesca at the beginning of Act 6. There the lovers have consummated their love and discuss whether they should part. In this scene Paolo has risen and gone to the window, stage right, while Francesca stands by her bed, center stage. Boker's reaction is unequivocal: "Why is [Paolo] at the window R? Why are not these two people talking over this vital matter face to face, like human beings? When I saw this scene, Paolo and Francesca went straggling about the stage as if they did not know of each other's presence. This scene should be more closely and directly done—done in dead earnest. When I saw them, I did not care a damn what became of either of them nor how often they were murdered. . . ." (Flory

60). Boker's concern for greater realism, however, was not limited to character portrayal but was extended to many of the play's other details. So, sitting in at Barrett's rehearsals and dismayed by the quality of the 'wedding chimes' that accompany the marriage between Francesca and Lanciotto, Boker declared to Barrett: "Whenever I hear them, these 'wedding chimes' have been miserable—a mere tinkle-tinkle of several bells. Can you not get up something better—something more like church bells?" (Flory 60). Similarly when the captain disrupts the post-wedding scene and sounds the alarm at the approach of the Ghibelines, Boker chided Barrett: "You have never yet made row enough over this alarm. There should be shouts, the sound of trumpets calling to arms, the ringing of the tocsin, the beating of kettle drums, the rumbling of wagons, the tramp of horses and everything to indicate a sudden military alarm. The sounds should die away in the distance before the speaking re-commences" (Flory 60). In these and many other details Boker thus displays a most developed theatrical sensitivity to the exigencies of a practical staging of *Francesca*.

Unfortunately, we do not have the reaction of Barrett to Boker's notes, but we know from the first-hand account of Otis Skinner (129), who played the part of Paolo, that the rehearsals were stormy. But from this tumultuous association between two great men of nineteenth-century American theater there resulted a production (Fig. 2) which not only did justice to Boker's and Barrett's theatrical concerns, but which also won glowing critical reviews and was extremely popular with theater-going audiences. *The New York Times* (August 28, 1883) said of the combined Boker-Barrett work that it "is undoubtedly a work of much power and beauty. . . . it is more concise, picturesque, and theatrical, and has been skillfully fitted to the stage. As it is presented, it has direct, nervous action, finely contrasted characters, incidents which are striking and thrilling, and something better than an average literary merit. Well-written plays are rare nowadays; well-written plays, that have a genuine dramatic quality and construction, are, it need hardly be said, still more rare. Mr. Boker has to a rather conspicuous degree the dramatic eye and instinct." And not only critics responded favorably. The play proved to be a run-away smash with the American public. In fact, the many extended runs of the play in the decade after 1882 brought Boker the only substantial profits from his literary career, royalties during this period amounting to two hundred dollars per week.

Barrett first performed the role of Lanciotto in Philadelphia in 1882 and, after taking the play on tour, presented it for a run of several months in New York in 1883. From this time until his death in 1891, Barrett made this play a continuous part of his repertoire. And through his powerful interpretation of Lanciotto, Barrett achieved one of his greatest parts, a part which captured the pathetic condition of the soul of the deformed cripple whose tortured outbursts, especially the lamentable line, "I cannot [look up], brother—God has bent me down," became unforgettable and "agitated the feelings of his audience with a force like that of a whirlwind" (Winter 321). The story of the American Francesca, however, does not end with Barrett. Throughout the 1890s there were various minor and unimportant revivals of the play. Then in 1901 Otis Skinner took on the role of Lanciotto (Fig. 3) and, once again, the play proved to be enormously successful, playing for extended runs in several American cities during the 1901–1902 season. Moreover, the American Francesca is also linked to the birth and growth of the American silent film industry.

In 1908 the American company, Vitagraph, included among its "quality films" the release of *Francesca da Rimini*, a film which shows obvious congruences with the Boker/Barrett version of the play: the jester is retained and renamed Beppe,¹³ the set designs are similar, there is a similar dramatic attitude towards Lanciotto and the story line is almost identical (Uricchio and Pearson 99–103). The film consists of fifteen shots and follows the story of Francesca and Paolo from the reception of Lanciotto's proposal of marriage through his departure for the wars, the lovers' infidelity, their betrayal by the jester Beppe and their murder at the hands of Lanciotto who concludes by stabbing himself. The costumes are elaborate and the action is played out against painted theatrical sets and exterior locations, both typical of the filming techniques of the time (Fig. 4). The movie was a huge success and helped establish Vitagraph's reputation as one of the most important of the pre-Hollywood companies. Years later, in the decade of its decline, silent cinema produced one further version of the Francesca tale, this time a full-feature film, *Drums of Love* (1928), directed by no less a Hollywood genius than David Wark Griffith. He transposes the tale to South America and situates the story within the aristocratic household of the de Alvias, Duke Don Cathos and his younger brother Count Leonardo. The rest of the details are standard—the marriage of a beautiful princess to the deformed older brother, her adulterous love for her husband's brother, discovery of the love and the murder of

the lovers. The film is novel for it affords two distinct endings, the one just described and another in which Cathos is killed by the fool and dies forgiving the lovers. The film also bears all of the classical hallmarks of Griffith's genius: panoramic shots of battle, truck-mounted cameras, extreme close-ups, Rembrandt lighting: these and many other touches affirm Griffith's status as the father of film technique. Griffith's *Drums of Love* is not only a unique silent film but also the last cinematic attempt to retrieve the story of Francesca along the lines established by Boker. The many sound versions of the Francesca story owe little to Boker's unique treatment of it and retrieve instead different elements from the long and rich tradition which had grown over the centuries around Dante's doomed, star crossed lovers.¹⁴

Both on the stage, therefore, and on film Francesca has been converted into an American icon. Of central importance to this cultural operation are Dante and Boker. For Dante's brief description serves as the enabling seed-ground for all subsequent treatments of the Francesca theme, Boker's included. And Boker's text, in literary descent from that of his Italian master, not only Americanizes Francesca, but also creates a tragedy which "is not an idyll of guilty love, but the tragedy of a lonely soul which stirs for a moment in ecstasy when it believes itself loved, only to sink into a deeper despair when it realizes itself betrayed" (Wood Krutch 463). Dante and Boker have thus succeeded in giving us two of the most significant versions of the story in world literature. Moreover, both versions display the creative geniuses of their authors and both achieve the status and dignity of high art, Dante's eschatologically driven *Commedia* with its condemnatory celebration of passionate love rising to the greatest heights of lyric poetry and Boker's dramatically human *Francesca* with its tragic tale of the outcast cripple being, according to Edward Sculley Bradley (132), "the greatest American romantic tragedy, and one of the greatest poetical tragedies in the language."

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NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1999 annual meeting of the Dante Society of America in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

2. Admittedly, all of these were written after Boker's *Francesca*. Two relevant examples are E.

Elsner's play, an adaptation of Pellico, *Francesca da Rimini* and J. S. Macy's *Francesca of Rimini* or *The Hunchback's Bride*, a tragedy in six acts.

3. 'Broadway' is here used metaphorically as being synonymous with the heart of the American theatrical experience and, in no way, is meant to imply that Boker's tragedy was ever, with the exception of the revival at Lincoln Center of the American Repertory Company of Twelve in 1967 (cf. *New York Times*, 12 1967), performed on Broadway, which is a reality that postdates Boker's lifetime.

4. All of the commentators cited, with the exception of Falso Boccaccio and Landino, are those contained in the *Dartmouth Dante Project* database. The glosses are for *Inferno* 5, ll. 97–98 and l. 107. Landino is quoted from Matteini, pp. 72 and 77 and the Falso Boccaccio is from the Vernon edition.

5. The following are the principal sources for the life of Boker: Bradley, Kitts, Meserve, Kunitz and Haycraft, Stoddard, Wood Krutch.

6. Boker oversaw the publication of his collected plays in 1856. A facsimile copy of this collection was published by Georg Olms in 1969. *Francesca da Rimini* has been reproduced in several anthologies of American plays, the most accessible of which is *Representative American Plays from 1867 to the Present Day*, edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn.

7. The historical events on which the drama is based took place somewhat earlier, certainly before 1286 by which time Gianciotto had remarried. For more details, see Vasina and Quaglio.

8. She often reprised the role, especially in 1865, the sixth century of Dante's birth, when she appeared in Florence in a star-studded cast that included Ernesto Rossi as Paolo and Tommaso Salvini as Lanciotto (Ristori 69–70). For studies of the tremendous influence which this actress had not only on Italian, but also on foreign audiences, during her many tours, see Piazza; Giorcelli, "Adelaide Ristori sulle scene britanniche e irlandesi;" Giorcelli, "Ristori on the American Scene;" Carlson.

9. Cf. Crawford's dedication to the French edition, "A Madame Sarah Bernhardt qui par sa magie créatrice a réincarné après six cents ans l'âme de Francesca 'che piange e dice'", and D'Annunzio's dedication to Duse: "Alla divina Eleonora Duse."

10. By 1838 Darwin had arrived at a sketch of a theory of evolution through natural selection and for the next two decades he worked on his theory which was first announced in a preliminary form in 1858 and published in its entirety in 1859, in *On the Origin of Species*.

11. Characteristically, Boker records his troubled feelings over the lawsuit in *The Book of the Dead* which he published in 1882.

12. Boker was a most enthusiastic and attentive reader of Shakespeare. He had undoubtedly seen Barrett in one of his many Shakespearian roles. For, by this time, Barrett had played Richard III, King Lear, Iago to Edwin Booth's Othello and Cassius to Booth's Brutus. Barrett, for his part, would have known of Boker's devotion to Shakespeare and would have detected the influences of the bard in *Francesca da Rimini*, the modeling of the hunchback on Richard III, the theme of jealous and revengeful love from *Othello* and the role of the fool and other elements borrowed from *King Lear*. Although Boker was steeped in Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, not all critics have been convinced that this was a positive influence. Richard Henry Stoddard, in fact, offered the opinion that if he could have forgotten them and been guided rather by his own genius, his work would have been more original. Moreover, with specific reference to *Francesca da Rimini*, Montrose J. Moses faults the play for its imitation of the Elizabethan stage (71).

13. The name change from Pepe to Beppe may have been influenced by the appearance in 1892 of Leoncavallo's *I pagliacci* one of whose protagonists is Beppe/Harlequin, the fool of the play within a play who does significant service in the real life drama.

14. Examples run the gamut from Raffaello Matarazzo's Pellico-inspired *Paolo e Francesca* (1949) to the incorporation of Francesca elements into a broader story such as that of *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948) directed by Preston Sturges and Taylor Hackford's *The Devil's Advocate* (1997).

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Fig. 1: Photograph of George Henry Boker



Fig. 2: A scene from Lawrence Barrett's 1882 production of Boker's *Francesca da Rimini*

Fig. 3: A scene from Otis Skinner's 1901 production of Boker's *Francesca da Rimini*



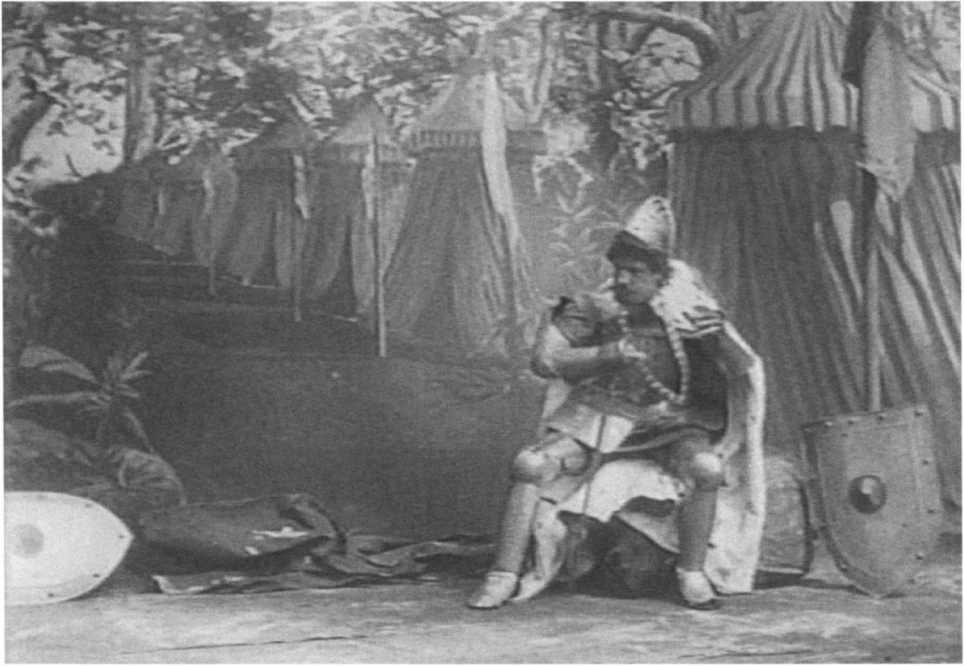


Fig. 4: A scene from Vitagraph's 1908 film *Francesca da Rimini*

Dante in India: Sri Aurobindo and *Savitri*

Un uom nasce a la riva
de l'Indo, e quivi non è chi ragioni
di Cristo né chi legga né chi scriva. . . .
(*Paradiso* 19:70–72)¹

BRENDA DEEN SCHILDGEN

The Bengali poet Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950) is considered one of the major Indian philosophers of the twentieth century.² Aurobindo's *Savitri*,³ at 24,000 lines the longest epic poem in the English language (though short compared to the 100,000 verses of the *Mahabharata*), is among the first responses to Dante's *Commedia* in India. Placing Aurobindo side by side with Dante enlarges the scope of Dante's influence, emphasizing the international appeal of his poetry. It also opens up discussion of a host of questions about literary relationships in the colonial and postcolonial periods, about the interconnection of culture and politics, and about "universal" symbolic language. The connection between Aurobindo and Dante represents a powerful example of literature's active role as transmitter of transcultural relationships in which differences in period, geography, religion, and even language become secondary to the literary purposes shared by the writers.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* was one of the passionate interests of writers in mid-nineteenth-century Concord, Massachusetts. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his journal, "It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us." Thoreau wrote

of the Indian masterpiece, "Thus it appears that the sweltering inhabitants of Charleston and New Orleans, of Madras and Bombay and Calcutta, drink at my well. In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagvat Geeta*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial."⁴

The passionate embrace of this ancient Indian religious/literary work is perhaps typical of the western "orientalist" imagination of mystical and spiritual India, a tradition that Edward Said, in his now quasi-canonical *Orientalism*, has argued began in the ancient world. "Orientalism" in the modern context, he has contended, goes back to the academic work of the eighteenth century when the study of "oriental" languages (which included both Semitic and Indo-European languages in Asia) expanded from the earlier studies of Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and Persian (Council of Vienne, 1312) to include Sanskrit. The German romantics were enthralled with their "discovery" of ancient Indian traditions, Goethe and Schlegel, for example, writing major works on Indian language and culture. Said, of course, links this academic work to a search for cultural authority over the "Orient" that parallels the military and commercial authority that the British and French were asserting in the same period.⁵ Thus, Emerson's and Thoreau's views seem to follow this notion of literary relationships. Yet, perhaps more provocative than this suspicious attitude towards their literary choices, which suggests that they are spurred by a desire for cultural conquest, would be to recognize that they were searching another literary-philosophical tradition for what they found lacking or moribund in their own. Or, put more simply, perhaps the work spoke to them in a way that resonated with their own interests, even if they did promote an "essentializing" approach to Indian culture. Emerson identified precisely what had appealed to him when he wrote that he had heard "the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us." Clearly Emerson and Thoreau's reception of the translated Indian texts in their nineteenth-century elite intellectual circumstances do not precisely parallel the reception of European texts by colonized Indian intellectuals in the same period. Nonetheless, it needs to be recognized that such transcultural reception was taking place both in the East and the West in this period.

The reception of ancient Indian literature and the creation of a "spiri-

tual India” with its pacifist traditions in nineteenth-century United States and Europe, of course, are well known features of literary relationships between West and East. Edward Said, wrote, “the ‘good’ Orient was invariably a classical period in a long-gone India.”⁶ In fact, however, this notion of “spiritual India” versus “materialist Europe” is shared on both sides of the divide. As Aijaz Ahmad puts it, “it is common practice among many circles in India to posit Hindu spirituality against Western materialism.”⁷ Less well known, and in some ways contradicting these views, is that at the same time, despite the stereotype, “materialist West” and “spiritual India,” in the West and in India in the nineteenth century, Italian medieval and Renaissance works were being absorbed by Indian intellectuals. In fact, not long after Emerson had rhapsodized the Indian tradition, Indian writers were absorbing the Christian literary tradition, including the gospels and Dante.

Indeed, why Thoreau and Emerson seized on the *Bhagavad Gita* as a great spiritual text might be paralleled by the Indian interest in European religious texts. Perhaps what inspired Emerson and Thoreau was similar to what Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), who received the Nobel prize for Literature (1909), noted in the New Testament gospels⁸ or Sri Aurobindo Ghose found in the “divine” Dante.

Discussions of literary relationships, whether of authors in a transcultural setting or within their own linguistic or national traditions have undergone extensive theoretical discussion in the last thirty years.⁹ Writing about the “repertoire of a literary text,” Wolfgang Iser argued that this repertoire “does not consist solely of social and cultural norms; it also incorporates elements and, indeed, whole traditions of past literature that are mixed together with these norms.”¹⁰ Iser’s approach recognizes the syncretic quality of literary allusion and the freedom of the writer to incorporate from diverse sources, thus remaking the original in the terms of the individual aesthetic product. Wai Chee Dimock’s recent essay in *PMLA* on Osip Mandelstam and Dante adds to the discussions when she argues, “Mandelstam’s love of Dante—the physical presence of the poetry inside his pocket—suggests that there is much to be said for literature as a continuum.”¹¹ Dimock’s idea of writers creating this cultural continuum has more in common with the argument presented here. In other words, when we look at how writers, not literary critics, expand their literary repertoire, we witness a pattern of recreation that may indeed exploit

resources but the mixture creates a transcultural fusion rather than disjunction.

That Dante's poetry became a feature of the "repertoire" of the United States and European literary artists from the early nineteenth century on is well-established. His influence outside these areas, however, has not been well documented, although the first half of the twentieth century witnessed the Italian poet's "translation" to writers in Russia, Argentina, and India. Osip Mandelstam, recognizing the global implications of Dante's linguistic choices, wrote in 1933, "L'opera di Dante è anzitutto un affacciarsi, sull'arena mondiale, della parlata italiana del suo tempo—percepita come globalità, come sistema. La più dadaistica delle lingue romanze si insedia così al primo posto in campo internazionale."¹² The Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges, besides his several essays on Dante,¹³ refers throughout his work to his Italian literary model.¹⁴ His immense indebtedness to Dante's poetry led him to comment, "Had I to name a single work as being at the top of all literature, I think I should choose the *Divina Commedia* by Dante. And yet I am not a Catholic. . . . You don't have to think of him in terms of the Middle Ages. Every word is perfect, every word is in its place."¹⁵

Indian interest in Dante begins with Michael Madhusudan Datta, a nineteenth-century Bengali writer who wrote, in the somewhat reductive mode of the time, "The nineteenth-century Bengali mind felt the need for a total moral vision of the universe, and if the feeling was created by the emotional urgencies of the age, its conflicts and complexities, the idea of embodying that in poetry came from *The Divine Comedy*."¹⁶ These observations bear a remarkable similarity to what Emerson and Thoreau wrote while meditating on the *Bhagavad Gita*. Datta's epic poem about the incarnated god Rama's descent into Hell recalls Dante's inscription over the gates of hell, "Lay down all hope, you that go in by me." For Datta, Dante was a "poet's teacher, the poet's poet." Prema Nandakumar, who wrote the only book on Sri Aurobindo and Dante, notes others who "transcreated" Dante into Bengali, including Hemchandra Banerjee's *Chhayamayi* (1880), a poetic re-creation of *Inferno* and Tagore's *Narakvas* (1897), which is also modeled on *Inferno*.¹⁷ Aurobindo, two generations after Datta, thinking of Dante strictly in terms of formal poetry, wrote that "Dante is, I think, the perfect type of austerity in poetry, standing between the two extremes [bare austerity and sumptuousness of language] and combining the most sustained severity of expression with a precise

power and fullness in the language which gives a sense of packed riches—no mere bareness anywhere.”¹⁸

Aurobindo’s reverence for his Italian precursor has continued with Indian writers. While Aurobindo made Dante the model for religious poetry because he [Dante] had intellectually grasped “the motives of Catholic Christianity and give[n] them a clear and supreme expression,”¹⁹ the erotic dynamic, the nexus between love and poetry intertwined more powerfully by Dante than any other poet, has stirred post-colonial writers. For example, Salman Rushdie in his 1999 novel, *The Ground Beneath her Feet*, translating the Dante/Beatrice transfigured love to the human domain, has his hero encounter the great love of his life, Vina Apsara, at nine years old in a chance meeting on a Bombay beach. Like Dante, the hero spends the rest of her life pursuing her, despite her involvement with others and until she dies a premature death.²⁰ In the 2000 novel of Pakistani writer Tariq Ali, the third in the *Islam Quintet*, *The Stone Woman*, Francesca’s lyric memory of her moment of love, is the occasion for a philosophical discussion of the nature of love by a homosexual who has the only long-lasting love relationship of any character in the novel. Hearing the entire recitation of Francesca’s words spoken in Italian by his lifetime partner, the character’s “features were filled with tenderness.” As the character speaking insists, “The Florentine was a genius.”²¹ And to further emphasize the attraction of Dante’s poetry outside both Europe and its medieval Catholic framework, the contemporary Turkish writer, Orhan Pamuk in his *The New Life* ²² transforms Dante’s *Vita Nuova* into a startling journey in which reading a book becomes the magical entry to love and new life.

Said, singling Dante out as epitomizing the “bridge between Antiquity and modernity” as the medieval poet “seamlessly combined the realistic portrayal of mundane reality with a universal and eternal system of Christian values”²³ follows Auerbach’s position that Dante is the “first to lay open the panorama of the common and multiplex world of human reality.”²⁴ Frank Kermode synthesized Dante’s contribution to poetry:

One needs, somehow, to reach an understanding of the fact that what most of us think of as literature—modern as opposed to ancient literature—and also the reading public of which one is a member, are in large measure Dante’s invention. He ought therefore to have been praised by layman as well as by scholars.²⁵

These foundational observations by twentieth-century literary critics about the formal features of Dante’s poem and the position of Dante’s

major work in a western literary canon, brilliant as they are, nonetheless neglect that synthesis between transcendent love and art, or poetry and passion that Dante places at the very heart of his aesthetic project. Yet, it is this relationship that has inspired the non-European writers referred to already. Perhaps it is in this feature that we witness Iser's description of the mode in which writers incorporate "elements or whole traditions of past literature" into their own literary frameworks.²⁶ Indeed through this syncretic act, or fusion, they tie their work to a community of texts with common interests and passions. Sri Aurobindo Ghose sees Dante's *Commedia* as "constructed by the poetic seeing mind" rather than the "demi-urgic power" that ruled Homer and Valmiki.²⁷ Coming on the literary scene at the very end of what has been called, in a direct link to Italian culture, the Bengali renaissance, Aurobindo shares with Dante the same philosophical/theological quest expressed in symbolic and metaphoric language.

Aurobindo and Savitri

The child of a Bengali Anglophile, Aurobindo had been raised speaking English and educated in a Catholic convent school in India. His father, eager to ensure his son's Englishness, sent him to England to continue his studies at Manchester Grammar School and then at St. Paul's in London. Later, at Cambridge, this outstanding student won the Greek and Latin prize. In training for the Indian Civil Service, he had already developed strong anti-British colonialism convictions even before he left St. Paul's. But at Cambridge he nonetheless continued to follow the course for his intended career as a British-Indian civil servant despite the fact that he was bored by the studies and found Indian Civil Service students uncultivated mediocrities. Ironically, he never took his degree at Cambridge because he failed the riding test that was required for the ICS credential.²⁸ As a teenager in England, he had begun to write poetry in English. Immersed in European literary traditions from the ancient to the modern periods, he taught himself Italian to read Dante in the original. He was multilingual in European languages and knew European poetry as his own tradition. K.K. Sharma wrote of Aurobindo's poetics:

In short, Sri Aurobindo's poetics is the natural corollary of his strikingly original creative mind plus variegated influences that his receptive mind felt from time to

time in India as well as abroad. Thus on his aesthetic vision can be perceived the impact of Homer, Aristophanes, Dante, Goethe, French poets, Shakespeare, the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, Kalidasa, Bhavbhuti, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Vivekanand, the Indian aesthetic tradition, the Greco-Latin and French traditions, and above all, the Indian spiritual tradition and his own spiritual and intellectual experiences.²⁹

This description of Aurobindo's poetry situates him, like Borges, Mandelstam, or Rushdie, as self-chosen heir to a literary community that no longer, and perhaps never did, emanate solely from national traditions. These writers, and in this discussion we could revert to Thoreau or Emerson, the translator of Dante's *Vita Nuova*, make literature beyond borders and national interests. Their literature reflects a profound migration of ideas and interests through which the works of one culture are recycled and remade for another cultural environment.

Despite his immersion in European culture, when Aurobindo returned to India in 1893, he set about learning Bengali and Sanskrit, languages he had only studied at Cambridge while training for the Indian Civil Service. In Bengal, in the midst of the Swadeshi Movement (a boycott of British goods movement) in the early part of the twentieth century, he became passionately engaged in the political movement that he hoped would lead to Indian independence from England. He was a revolutionary organizer, political journalist, and one of the leaders of the nationalist party labeled by history the Extremists.³⁰ But he faced radical failure in the political sphere, which eventually led to imprisonment. That experience, however, like Dante's exile from his native Florence, led to a spiritual quest that sent Aurobindo back to the literary roots of the Hindu traditions. When he was in prison he had one of many mystical experiences, the consequences of which were to turn him towards the spiritual traditions of his homeland, and to avidly study Sanskrit and Hindu spiritual writings. This led to his commitment to philosophy and to the writing of *Savitri*, which, in addition to his immense philosophical output, he spent the last thirty years of his life writing. His models were the Latin and Sanskrit epics, Milton's *Paradise Lost*³¹ and Dante's *Commedia*. Though Dante had chosen his eloquent vernacular for his epic, *Savitri* is not in Bengali. Like Petrarch's Latin *Africa*, Aurobindo chose the contemporary international language, in his case English, as the medium for his epic. Comparing the European epic with Aurobindo's, Syed Mhedhi Imam writes of *Savitri*:

In respect of Substance *Savitri* seeks a new range of the Epic. Whilst the “Iliad” of Homer deals with the War of Troy; the “Odyssey” with the Wanderings of Ulysses; the “Aeneid” with the rise of Imperial Rome; and “Paradise Lost” with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden’s murmuring brooks, *Savitri* breaks with all previous traditions of epic poetry. Its subject is the transformation of Earth into Supermind. In respect of Epic Poetry, the nearest approach to *Savitri* is the “Divine Comedy” of Dante wherein the poet, at first led by Virgil, Human reason, and later by Beatrice, the symbol of the Light, rises from the darkness of Hell and passes through cleansing fires of Purgatory to emerge into the plane of Paradise.³²

The author goes on to distinguish *Savitri* from the *Commedia* on the grounds that neither Dante or Beatrice can bring the Light/Truth back to Earth as Savitri does. Nonetheless, when Dante leaves behind his poem as a path to light, he transforms poetry into spiritual journey, just as *Savitri* the poem does. Both writers’ major literary works shared in an effort to synthesize political and social aspirations with philosophy and theology through epic poetry and to make human experience fit into a universal whole. To achieve this, both authors turned to eschatological visionary poetry, taking their main characters into the other world.

Savitri, which means Light, is a character from the *Mahabharata*. When her husband dies after twelve months of marriage, she undertakes a journey to the other world to rescue him from the land of the dead. Like the *Commedia*, the characters in the poem are both historical/mythological and allegorical. Thus, Satyavan, Savitri’s husband, is one “who carries the truth,” Savitri is “divine grace in human form,” and Aswapathy, Savitri’s father, is lord of Force, “the lord of spiritual power, strength, and light.”³³ Written in twelve books in the tradition of Virgil and Milton, the poem takes Savitri to hell and heaven from where she successfully retrieves her husband. The journey is an opportunity to launch a complex inquiry into the meaning of death and therefore life and truth, which are examined according to Aurobindo’s philosophical speculations. His philosophy is a profound reworking of traditional Hindu texts, like the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the epics, which are further expanded under the influence of Christianity, Christian theological traditions, and European philosophy. Savitri is the incarnation of the divine mother and the poem describes a redemption by divine love due to her actions.

The descent into Hell for both poets becomes a journey into the abyss, the creation of human egoism. Besides the obvious similarities of a jour-

ney into the other world shared by the poems, the area of greatest affinity is in the metaphorical means adopted by both poets to evoke the transcendent. In Book 2, "The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds," Aurobindo deploys the symbolic language common to all mystical poetry, and familiar to us in Dante's *Paradiso*. In Canto 1, "The World-Stair," he writes,

In a deep oneness of all things that are,
The universe of the Unknown arose.
A self-creation without end or pause
Revealed the grandeurs of the Infinite.³⁴

Writing of stairs, waves of light, and impenetrable oceans, he describes the ladder of ascent as,

There walled apart by its own innerness
In a mystical barrage of dynamic light
He saw a lone immense high-curved world-pile
Erect like a mountain chariot of the Gods
Motionless under an inscrutable sky.³⁵

In Book 2, recalling Dante's image of the "unknowable Mind of God" (*Par.* 19:52–57), Aurobindo describes the fragility of human knowledge of divine will,

Impenetrable, a mystery recondite
Is the vast plan of which we are a part;
Its harmonies are discords to our view,
Because we know not the great theme they serve.³⁶

Specifically reversing Dante's "E 'n la sua volontade è nostra pace" (*Par.* 3:85), to describe the more common human status, he writes: "Our instruments have not that greater light, / Our will tunes not with the eternal Will, / Our heart's sight is too blind and passionate."³⁷ In the same passage, we find yet another direct reference to the *Commedia*. Indeed, Aurobindo alludes to *Paradiso* 19, where Dante raises the question of the "salvation of the Indians," when he writes: "Our reason cannot sound life's mighty sea/ And only counts its waves and scans its foam."³⁸ This particular reference puts Dante's concern about "universal salvation" and divine justice into the cultural context of the "Other." Dante had the

Eagle answer in response to whether those who have not heard of
“Christ” might be saved,

Però ne la giustizia sempiterna
la vista che riceve il vostro mondo,
com' occhio per lo mare, entro s'interna;
che, ben che da la proda veggia il fondo,
in pelago nol vede; e nondimeno
èli, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.

(*Par.* 19:58–63)

Invoking the vast impenetrability of the divine mind that they liken to the world's oceans, both poets retreat from circumscribing the divine work. Dante had invoked this divine inscrutability to answer the contradiction posed by the universal claims of Christianity and the existence of a “just” Indus outside the Christian world.³⁹ Aurobindo, on the other hand, in adopting Dante's language, emphasizes that he shares a spiritual understanding with his poetic precursor.

When Savitri holds her dead husband in Book 9, “Towards the Black Void,” the poet, evoking Dante, writes, “So she was left alone in the huge wood,/Surrounded by a dim unthinking world,”⁴⁰ as the dark wood, a *topos* that has worldwide synchronic resonance and is familiar to us from *Inferno*, becomes the metaphor for radical loss. When she faces this loss, “At first in a blind stress of woods she moved/ With strange inhuman paces on the soil,/ Journeying as if upon an unseen road.”⁴¹ With this echo from the opening lines of Dante's poem, Aurobindo's literary repertoire provides the metaphor for the wilderness of the soul, or psychological despair. But although Dante's prologue scene is present at this critical moment in the poem, and therefore links Aurobindo's understanding of radical loss to an ongoing poetic culture that is not restricted to India, this is grafted onto the traditional fecund forest environment of Indian epic,

Around her on the green and imaged earth
The flickering screen of forests ringed her steps . . .
. . . And all the murmurous beauty of the leaves
Rippled around her like an emerald robe.⁴²

Intertwining the Dante references with the common Indian epic *topos* of the forest, Aurobindo demonstrates how literary allusion can function to fuse cultural norms with other traditions. In doing so, he focuses on

connections, parallelisms, and common interests rather than highlighting distortions or ruptures.

These references to Dante's text, notwithstanding, there are substantial differences between the poets, for Savitri's retrieval of her husband from the other world contrasts with Dante's permanent loss of Beatrice, who takes her place in the world beyond while he returns to Earth. Aurobindo's visionary poem ends with the return to earth as Savitri

. . . pressed the living body of Satyavan:
On her body's wordless joy to be and breathe
She bore the blissful burden of his head
Between her breasts' warm labour of delight.⁴³

She achieved her desire, to retrieve her husband, and broke the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, at least for the moment. Joined in ecstatic union, Divine Light/Grace and Truth return to Earth, while Dante's poem ends as "A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa" (Here power failed the lofty phantasy [33:142]), with his own will turned to the will of God.

Nonetheless, these differences aside, *Savitri*, like the *Commedia*, reflects the very synthesis both writers sought in their cultural and spiritual quests. Both remake their ancient epic traditions. Dante created and adapted his Florentine vulgar language to this ancient genre, to create a Christian epic; Sri Aurobindo, in contrast, adopted English as the literary language suited to the modern epic poem, revivifying an ancient Hindu myth according to the terms of his spiritual and philosophical views. *Savitri* follows the tradition of great philosophical epic poetry, creating an intellectual, poetic, and spiritual synthesis. It is written in Miltonic iambic pentameter verse, has the philosophical and scientific grandeur of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, and follows Dante's encyclopedic vision in the *Commedia*. The poem seeks to see the world and human experience in it as a totality in which human relationships, politics, philosophy, and theology are not fragmented pursuits, but the means for humans to achieve a mystical union with God. The world itself can be transformed by Savitri's discovery that death can be overcome.

As a consequence of philosophical and political exile, both Dante and Aurobindo turned to their own spiritual traditions in search of a profounder truth than their earlier intellectual and political quests had provided. Both "universalists," their search was to discover how the divine

enters the world of human experience and to represent this discovery in poetry. They were both as one critic has said of them, "Laureates of the divine," whose apocalyptic visionary poetry was to express "The mantra, poetic expression of the deepest spiritual reality," which Aurobindo wrote "is only possible when three highest intensities of poetic speech meet and become indissolubly one, a highest intensity of rhythmic movement, a highest intensity of verbal form and thought-substance, of style, and a highest intensity of the soul's vision of truth."⁴⁴ Writing about the 700th birthday of Dante, R. K. Das Gupta crystallized Dante's meaning to the Indian religious intellectuals of the twentieth century:

Perhaps Dante will have a deeper and more pervasive influence in our poetry and fiction when the Indian religious imagination will make a fresh effort to define the moral universe in terms of man's individual and social purpose. The effort will demand a conjunction of poetry and philosophy which will almost necessarily, turn our minds to the work of Dante.⁴⁵

What does it mean to put these deeply religious poets from opposite sides of the world and from different religious traditions side by side to discuss their connection? This essay has raised a number of issues about influence studies, about the relationship of culture and politics, and about "universal" interests. This discussion challenges former ideas about influence; narrow influence studies that used "originality" as the basis for judging literary merit clearly have no weight. Such approaches attempted to prove the European cultural influence on India or the dependence of Europe on India in an effort to denigrate or undermine the respective cultural product. More recent influence studies like anxiety of influence would be unfaithful to the universal visions of both poets. Both Dante and Aurobindo were in dialogue with their literary precursors, through whom they created communities of texts, with which they formed cultural links for debate, challenge, synthesis and continuity as well as discontinuity.

Considering Aurobindo's interest in Dante also reopens debates about the idea of "universals," which are completely out of favor intellectually at the moment. A needed adjustment to Cartesian essentializing of the "nature of man," this effort has contributed to the recovery of many important writers and also justly called normative canons into question. But, at the same time, discussions of "universal" value have often been summarily dismissed when in fact shared interests have taken a large role in the history of culture. Without basic notions of shared value, we could

not contemplate international law, human rights, environmental issues, or rules of engagement in warfare as Jürgen Habermas, the quintessential post-metaphysical philosopher, has argued in *The Inclusion of the Other*.⁴⁶ When Dante asks the question about the man born on the banks of the Indus, he is raising the issue of universal salvation:

. . . Un uom nasce a la riva
de l'Indo, e quivi non è chi ragioni
di Cristo né chi legga né chi scriva;
e tutti suoi voleri e atti buoni
sono, quanto ragione umana vede,
sanza peccato in vita o in sermoni.
Muore non battezzato e sanza fede:
ov' è questa giustizia che 'l condanna?
ov' è la colpa sua, se ei non crede?
(*Par.* 19:70–78)

When Dante has the Eagle answer that it is impossible for the Primal Will to be unjust, of course, his answer was cryptic, but ultimately not restrictive, for he insisted that the judgment of human salvation was a divine prerogative, not a human one.⁴⁷

Aurobindo's position, a result of the Hindu-Christian dialogue of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was expansive. Like Dante, Bonaventure, and Augustine in the western tradition, before him,⁴⁸ he followed mystical contemplation, the discovery from within as the path to achieve unity with humanity and the divine. Sri Aurobindo hoped that humans would awake to the sense of humanity as a totality, a vision he saw expressed in a continuum of poetry and poets. In *The Future Poetry*, he wrote,

. . . the greatest poets have been always those who have had a large and powerful interpretive and intuitive vision of Nature and life and man and whose poetry has arisen out of that in a supreme revelatory utterance of it. Homer, Shakespeare, Dante, Valmiki, Kalidasa. . . Sight is the essential poetic gift. The archetypal poet in a world of original ideas is, we may say, a Soul that sees in itself intimately this world and all the others and God and Nature and the life of beings and sets flowing from its centre a surge of creative rhythm and word-images which become the expressive body of the vision. . . .⁴⁹

Thus, Aurobindo saw poetry as possessing the power to traverse eras and cultures, East and West, past and present, and as the means to express

the vision of the totality of human experience rather than to dwell on its fragmentariness.

Finally, the case of Sri Aurobindo and Dante calls into question the great critical myth of materialist Europe versus religious India, for the major metaphysical poet of India in the twentieth century discovered in the European Dante the epitome of spiritual insight he sought for his own poetry.

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NOTES

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1. All quotes from Dante come from *The Divine Comedy*, trans. and commentary Charles S. Singleton (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970–76).

2. For a brief biography, see Peter Heehs, *Sri Aurobindo: A Brief Biography* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).

3. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, vols. 1 and 2 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1950).

4. See “Afterword: Why did Henry David Thoreau Take the Bhagavad-Gita to Walden Pond?” *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna’s Counsel in Time of War*, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller (New York: Bantam Books, 1986), 155–56.

5. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 19–22, 150, *passim*.

6. Said, *Orientalism*, 99. See also his response to criticisms of the theory of “orientalism” in “Orientalism Reconsidered,” *Europe and Its Others*, ed. Francis Barker et al. (Colchester: University of Exeter, 1985), 14–27. For criticisms of Said’s notion of “orientalism,” see Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (London: Verso, 1992), 159–219.

7. See Ahmad, *In Theory*, 184.

8. See, for example, “The Son of Man,” in *The Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 364.

9. See, for example, Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1982); Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), 522–31; Jacob Neusner, *Canon and Connection: Intertextuality in Judaism* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1987); Michel Fishbane, *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

10. See Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 79.

11. See Wai Chee Dimock, “Literature for the Planet,” *PMLA* 116:1 (2001), 174.

12. Osip Mandel’shtam, *Conversazione su Dante*, trans. Remo Faccani (Genova: Il Melangolo, 1994), 48–49.

13. Jorge Luis Borges, *Nueve Ensayos Dantescos*, intro. Marcos Ricardo Barnatán (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1982).
14. For a discussion of Borges and Dante, see María Rosa Menocal, *Writing in Dante's Cult of Truth: From Borges to Boccaccio* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991).
15. *Borges at Eighty: Conversations*, ed. and with photographs Willis Barnstone (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 93.
16. As quoted in R. K. Das Gupta, *700th Anniversary of the Birth of Dante: A Souvenir* (New Delhi: University of Delhi, 1965), 52.
17. See Prema Nandakumar, *Dante and Sri Aurobindo: A Comparative Study of the divine Comedy and Savitri* (Madras: Affiliated East-West Press), 52.
18. Letter dated October 8, 1932 in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo (On Poetry and Literature)* (Bombay: Sri Aurobindo Circle, 1949), 20.
19. Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, in *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971), vol. 9, 42.
20. Salman Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath her Feet* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1999), 66–68.
21. Tariq Ali, *The Stone Woman* (London: Verso, 2000), 265–67.
22. Orhan Pamuk, *The New Life*, trans. from Turkish Güneli Gün (New York: Vintage, 1997).
23. Said, *Orientalism*, 68.
24. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Doubleday, 1957), 192.
25. Frank Kermode, *New Statesman* (January 7, 1966), 15.
26. Iser, *Act of Reading*, 79.
27. Aurobindo, Letter dated March 31, 1932 in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo (On Poetry and Literature)*, 302.
28. Heehs, *Sri Aurobindo*, 14–17.
29. K. K. Sharma, "Poetry as 'The Mantra of the Real,'" in *Sri Aurobindo: Critical Considerations*, ed. O. P. Mathur (Bara Bazar, Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1997), 66.
30. Heehs, *Sri Aurobindo*, 38–50.
31. See K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, "Milton and Sri Aurobindo," in *Sri Aurobindo: Critical Considerations*, 149–64.
32. Syed Mehdi Imam, *Savitri Unveiled: A Selection* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), 11–12.
33. See M. P. Pandit, *Introducing Savitri* (Pondicherry: Dipti Publications, 1982), 2–3.
34. *Savitri*, vol. 1, 87.
35. *Savitri*, vol. 1, 89.
36. *Savitri*, vol. 1, 146–47.
37. *Savitri*, vol. 1, 147.
38. *Savitri*, vol. 1, 147.
39. See the chapter "Dante and the Indus," in my book, *Dante and the Orient* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 92–109.
40. *Savitri*, vol. 2, 207.
41. *Savitri*, vol. 2, 212.
42. *Savitri*, vol. 2, 212–213.
43. *Savitri*, vol. 2, 337.
44. Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, 17.
45. Das Gupta, *700th Anniversary of the Birth of Dante*, 54.
46. Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, ed. Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998).
47. See Louis Capéran, *Le problème du salut des infidèles: Essai historique* (Toulouse: Grand Séminaire, 1934; orig. 1912), 105–218. On Dante, Capéran writes that the Florentine recognized there were Christians who were damned as well as non-Christians who had not heard of Christianity and who might yet be saved (206–12). Also, see Kenelm Foster, "The Son's Eagle: *Paradiso* XIX" and

"The Two Dantes III: The Pagans and Grace," in *The Two Dantes and Other Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 137–55 and 220–53; Schildgen, "Dante and the Indus."

48. For this tradition, see John Freccero, *Dante, The Poetics of Conversion* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986); Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Dante, Poet of the Desert* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979).

49. Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, 30.

Riflessioni politiche dantesche secondo due commenti inediti, del Trecento e del primo Quattrocento, al canto VI del *Purgatorio*

MASSIMO SERIACOPI

“**L**eggere Dante”, entrare nella complessità del suo pensiero, specialmente qualora si tenga conto del sistema ascensionalmente preordinato che costituisce trama e fondamenta del suo poema, non è mai stata cosa facile. Lo dimostrano, con il loro “disorientamento” rispetto alla novità e profondità della struttura e del dettato, già i commentatori coevi al poeta.

Eppure, sia per la loro intrinseca valenza di “documenti letterari” (che già in sé trovano il loro “diritto all’esistenza”, e che inoltre offrono spesso una ricca messe di notazioni storiche, linguistico-stilistiche, ecc.), sia perché comunque si rivelano a volte chiarificatori rispetto ai modelli mentali e culturali a cui Dante apparteneva, i commenti al poema risalenti al XIV e XV secolo meritano di essere “recuperati” (anche quando frammentari superstiti di sistemi interpretativi evidentemente più ampiamente organizzati) e attentamente considerati, come è nel caso della serie degli inediti tre e quattrocenteschi ai quali chi scrive sta da anni lavorando.

Così, a proposito di uno dei nodi centrali che costituiscono la materia della *Commedia*, quello politico cioè, si vuole qui proporre qualche meditazione esegetica rintracciata all’interno di un inedito commento del primo Quattrocento e di un altrettanto inedito sforzo esegetico ancora trecentesco relativamente all’invettiva politica contenuta nel canto VI del *Purgatorio*.

È noto a tutti, almeno schematicamente, qual è il piano compositivo e di lettura proposto dal poeta: i canti sestì delle tre cantiche sono quelli politici per eccellenza, con un moto ascensionale via via più ampio, tale da prendere in esame, a livello dell'*Inferno*, la situazione politica degenerata della sola Firenze; poi, a livello del *Purgatorio*, l'accurata disamina si rivolge a tutta l'Italia; infine, è l'intera compagine imperiale a divenire materia, nel sesto del *Paradiso*, della reprimenda dantesca.

Non troppo ovviamente, il primo dei due commentatori da me qui chiamati in causa, all'altezza dell'invettiva contro l'Italia, che inizia dal verso 76 (*Ahi, serva Italia . . .*), sente il bisogno di fornire una compiuta localizzazione geografica della nostra penisola, fornendo così una doppia serie di chiose, visto che poi ripete sul margine destro della carta le prime due parole dello stesso verso chiosando, stavolta, il messaggio morale e politico ravvisato all'interno del passo successivo.

Ma andiamo per ordine; chiariamo, intanto, che siamo di fronte alle chiose apposte da un ignoto commentatore, interlinearmente e marginalmente, ad un testo del poema dantesco esemplato (quanto alla cantica purgatoriale, compresa tra la carta 73r e la carta 138r del codice) nel 1418, come comprova l'*explicit* di carta 138r: "Explicit Purgatorio a dì due marzo 1418"; tale codice è attualmente conservato all'interno della Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze con la segnatura Pluteo 40. 24; testo e chiose appaiono ascrivibili ad una medesima mano.

Dunque: alla carta 84r, riguardo al summenzionato verso 76, il copista annota dapprima la rispondenza delle suddivisioni del canto già operate nella carta precedente, in apertura del canto (o "capitolo", come è qui definito) stesso:

terzia parte, dove fa una digressione, ciò è si parte dalla materia, nella quale fa una invettiva contra Italia e contra i principali altori [= autori] della sua disolazione.

Aggiunge poi la "collocazione geografica" menzionata, aggiungendo *infra* notazioni storiche e mitologiche:

Questa Italia è una parte d'Europa, e, possedata già da' Greci, fu chiamata "la grande Grecia"; poi posseduta da Italo, re di Cicilia, lo quale lasciò Cicilia e venne abitare in Italia: e da lui prese quel nome. La quale Italia è più lunga che larga, e stendesi dall'occidente cominciando dalla Provenza e dall'Alpe di Monte Appennino, che cingono Italia da occidente e cominciano tra Niza e Saona; e l'uno de' braci delle ditte Alpi di Monte Apennino si stende per mezzo Italia. E

li monti Silici son termini della fine di Pannonia infino al fiume Adda; e congiungesi con essa Istria di verso l'oriente infino a Reggio, il quale è rimpetto alla Cicilia: e anco la Cicilia si dice esser d'Italia; e dove è la terra di Reggio finisce, e stendesi inverso tra settentrione e levante: come lo braccio dalla mano inverso il gommito, così Reggio inverso la mano, e quindi si stende infino al gombito, e quivi è Taranto, e quivi è lo mare chiamato "Golfo di Vinegia", ovvero "Adriano", da indi in giuso infino a Vinegia; e lo di<t>to gorfo è di sopra al braccio ove finisce Italia, e lo mare Adriano ancora per gran parte inverso oriente e mezo de lo mare Ionio. E per largeza si stende da' confini della Francia per grande parte, ciò è dall'Alpe sopradette infino al mare Terreno, inveerso l'oriente, ciò è da Vinegia in suso infino al mare detto, overo Golfo Adriano, di verso settentrione, e lo mare Terreno di verso mezodì, imperò che lla Sicilia ha di sopra lo mare Ionio, e inverso l'occidente è lo mare Terreno. E dice sì che Italia <. . .> province; e la prima è Vinegia, nella quale sono queste cittadi: Vicenza, Verona e Mantova; da parte Lombardia, Melano e Pavvia e altri cittadi; al fine della Francia <. . .>za si chiamano.

Ecco, questo è quanto viene appuntato quanto alla determinazione storico (mitologico)-geografica; poi si slitta sull'altro piano esegetico, come ho già preannunciato; così, dopo aver ripetuto e sottolineato, in una chiosa marginale, l'emistichio *Ahi, serva Italia*, si aggiungono notazioni assai interessanti riguardo alla valutazione dantesca della realtà politica italiana di quei tempi, filtrata dalla rilettura dell'esegeta:

qui dimostra l'altore come Italia, per l'odio e per i vizii d'Italiani, non merita esser più donna, ma più tosto d'i bordelli, i quali sono luoghi molto sozi e disonesti. E questo dice ché, mentro che Italiani regevano Italia con giustizia e con ragione e stendevonsi co' Romani nelli atti virtuosi, erano liberi; mo, per li vizi loro, son fatti servi, imperò ch'ogni omo che pecca è servo, sì che sono servi ai peccati e sono servi alli tiranni ch'og<g>i sono inn Italia, e più ne erano al tempo di Dante. E però dice: *Ahai, serva Italia*. E vuol dire: 'Vedi se dalle prode', ciò è, 'se dalle marine per fino alla terra se tu hai pace, e vedrai che no'. 'Che giovò che Iustiniano imperadore correggesse le legi con che si governa la replubica, se lla sella è vota?'; ciò è: 'Che ti giova, ché non lassi sedere l'impero nella sua sedia?'.

Né ci si ferma qui, nel tentativo di chiarificazione del dettato quanto alla tematica politico-morale; difatti, relativamente al verso 91, il chiosatore scrive sul margine destro:

Ahi gente: 'Che vui Italiani dovereste essere ubidienti allo 'mperio, e sareste in buono stato e senza gue<r>re, e così sederebe Cesare nella sella'. E qui aduce l'esempio di Cristo per lo Evangelio: "Date quello ch'è di Dio a Dio, e quello ch'è di Cesare a Cesare". Seguita: O *Alberto tedesco*, dice l'altore, *giusto giudicio*

dalle stelle cagia, 'però che tu e tuo padre avete guasto il bel giardino d'Italia per avarizia: per non lasciare il ducato di Starliche, non siete venuti a sigiucare Italia e governalla con giustizia e con pace, e avetela lasciata in guerra e guasture; e però sarebe di bisogno che llo giudicio di Dio venisse sopra di voi'.

Notazioni queste, bisogna ammetterlo, che, più che aggiungere dati originali al secolare commento, risultano un'ulteriore testimonianza della ricezione, valutazione e ritrasmissione dei messaggi danteschi, ma sono anche, allo stesso tempo, rivelatrici di una precisa temperie culturale.

Proseguendo, nella carta successiva (84r) è possibile rintracciare altre interessanti notazioni all'altezza del verso 106 del canto in esame (*Vieni a veder Montecchi e Capelletti*):

in questi versi l'altore invoca: 'O Alberto, vieni e vedi i tuoi difetti per non aver cura di governar l'imperio'. *Montechi e Capelletti*: questi furono due parti in Cremona, [sic] le quali si disfeceno per lor nimicizia. *Monaldi e Filippeschi*: questi furono due altre parti in Ancona, le quali, al tempo di Dante, vivevano in gran sospetto. Ove dice: 'O Alberto, uom senza cura, ché vedevi guastar le tter<r>e e non te ne curavi'. *Vieni crudel*: qui dice Dante: 'Vieni tu, Alberto, e vedi la presura', ciò è, 'vedi il gravamento che fanno i tuoi conti, e marchesi, e li altri signori, ai loro sudditi; vieni e cura lor magagne', ciò è, 'però vedi tu che non sia. Vieni e vedi, Alberto, la tua Roma': imperoché dice il vero, che llo imperadore è re d'i Romani, 'e di e notte piagne', imperoch'essendo oppresati i Romani dai lor cittadini e maltatati, facien sì, ed è vedova, imperoché l'imperio è suo sposo, 'e tu l'abandoni, e però è vedova'. E qui parla in figura di Roma: 'Cesare mio', imperoché tutti l'imperadori si chiamarono Cesari, dal primo Cesare, 'perché m'abandoni, perché non stai meco?'. E seguita: 'E se pietà non ti mo<r>de d'Italiani, vieni e vergognati almeno, ché per avarizia ti stai nelle parti della Magna e lasci guastare Italia, giardino dello imperio'. Seguita.

Ci si sposta poi su considerazioni d'ordine più strettamente religioso, commentando il verso 118:

E se licito m'è: qui usa l'altore un modo come si volesse doler di Dio, ma non è, e però dice: *Se licito m'è*, imperoché nonn è licito, o *sommo Giove, idest*, Iddio, imperoché tanto vuol dire Giove quanto aiutatore, e però sta bene questo vocabolo a dDio, ch'E' ben può aiutare. E perché non si possa pigliar errore, però dice *per noi crocifisso*, imperoché i pagani ebono uno dio che ssi chiamò Giove. E però dice: 'per noi crocifisso in terra', *idest*, Cristo Iesù. Seguita: *O è preparazione*, quasi dica: 'Idio vede tutto, e tutto fa buon fine: forse lasci tu guastare Italia per alcun altro bene'. Seguita: 'Ogni vilano diventa un Marcello' [con un richiamo, sul margine destro viene poi appuntato: *e un Bargei*]. Costui fu un romano di poca condizione, e, epr parlare male della contraria parte, si fece molto

grande; onde seguita l'altore: 'Ogni villano che va parteggiando diventa un Marcello, e così si guasta Italia'. Seguita.

Non prive di interesse anche le osservazioni successive, relative al verso 127 (*Fiorenza mia . . .*), quando si ritorna dalla situazione nazionale a quella del Comune d'origine di Dante:

quarta e ultima parte, dov'e' fae una invettiva speciale contra Fiorenza, sua patria. *Fiorenza mia*: in questi versi l'altore usa una retorica che mostra il contrario di quel che comincia: *Fiorenza mio [sic], ben puo' esser conte<nta>*. Ciò vuol dire: 'Ben puo' star malcontenta di questa digression', *idest*, di partirsi dalla materia usata, di partirsi di trattar d'Italia e dello 'mperadore, dov'e' seguita: *mercè del popolo tuo*; e questo s'intende per contrario, ch'e' non s'argomenta contro ai cittadini ch'usano tirannia in disfarli, non piglia argomento. *Molti hanno giustizia nel cuore*, ma non la dimostrano per paura; *ma 'l popolo tuo l'ha in sommo della bocca*, *idest*, i Fiorentini, e gridano giustizia, ma dentro hanno ingiustizia. *Molti rif<i>utano lo com<un>e incarco*, per un atto d'ipocresia, per meglio poter rubare. *Or ti fa' lieta*, 'tu Fiorenza', per lo contrario; e 'fatti lieta', ciò è, 'a' tu' stati, c'hai ben di che'. *Tu ricca*, per lo contrario: benché alcuni vi sia ricchi, non la comune gente. *Tu con pace*, per contrario: 'Sempre stai in guer<r>a, dentro e di fuori'. *Tu con freno*, per contrario, imperoché dove s'usa arroganza non v'è senno. Questo che seguita <. . .> dov'e' dice: *S'i' dico il vero, l'afetto lo mostra*. Atene e Lacedemona sono due città in Grecia, nelle quali erano molto senno, e molto pugnarono insieme, e feciono molti leggi molto civili e belle; onde l'altore vuol dire: 'Voi non faceste così, ma avete fatti vostri statuti e leggi', i quali mette per figura che non durono da ottobre a mezo novembre, quasi dica: 'Che in poco tempo li rompesti'.

Dopo questa estesa serie di notazioni stilistico-retoriche e politico-morali, un'altra breve chiosa sigla la chiusura degli interventi dell'esegeta sul canto; sul margine destro del verso 145 (*Quante volte . . .*) troviamo infatti questa traslitterazione del dettato dantesco:

'Quante volte ha' tu, Fiorenza, fatto nuove legi e costumi e non han<n>o àuto posa, come fa la 'nferma in sulle piume, che non trova posa'.

Nell'analisi del secolare commento al poema, lo sforzo esplicativo operato dal nostro ignoto commentatore non può essere ignorato, in quanto oltre che tentativi puntuali di interpretazione dei versi in esame rende conto di precisi modelli interpretativi, di delineate "chiavi di lettura"; in più ci permette spesso un confronto con dati storici, "tecnici", ecc., che altrimenti sarebbero, dopo secoli, davvero difficilmente recuperabili, inse-

riti tra l'altro in un'ottica assai più vicina a quella dantesca rispetto alla nostra.

Il secondo dei commenti presi in esame riguardo alla problematica etico-politica per come è espressa all'interno del sesto canto purgatoriale è contenuto nel codice segnato Pluteo 90 superiore 130, sempre conservato nella Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze e risalente all'ultimo quarto del XIV secolo, come appare evidente all'analisi della *scripta* (littera cancelleresca bastarda).

Testo e commento alla cantica sono compresi alle carte 2r-81v; anche in questo caso l'ignoto copista ha trascritto tanto il testo, che le rubriche e le chiose (queste ultime, sia interlineari che marginali, sono semplicemente di modulo più piccolo).

Già nella rubrica introduttiva al canto (c. 12v) il commentatore aveva avvertito che argomento della trattazione sarebbe stata, dopo l'incontro con Sordello, "una bella digressione" di Dante rivolta soprattutto "contra Firenze"; e notevole è il fatto che, all'altezza del v. 91 (*Ahi, gente . . .*; c. 14r), si richiami il confronto con il trattato politico dantesco:

Dante, in un suo libro che si chiama *La Monarchia*, tiene che tutto il mondo debba ubbidire a due signori, ciò è lo 'mperadore e 'l papa. Lo 'mperadore si debba ubbidire in cose temporali, ma 'l papa in cose spirituali. E summe l'argomento da Cristo, il quale, essendo domandato da' farisei, avendo un denario, dicendo: "Che imagine è questa", rispuose: "Ea que sunt Cesaris reddantur Cesaris, que sunt Dei reddantur Deo, et cetera".

Di rilievo il fatto che il commentatore, esperto di altre opere dantesche oltre al poema, scelga qui (in concomitanza con altri esegeti coevi, come è nel caso, ad esempio, del cosiddetto Anonimo Fiorentino) di riportare la teoria "dei due soli": è testimonianza, questo, di una precisa scelta "di lettura", che molto intelligentemente pone a confronto opere diverse di uno stesso autore laddove si trattano identiche tematiche.

Già come breve chiosa ai versi 88 e 90, relativamente alle immagini rispettivamente del *freno* e della *vergogna*, il commentatore si era lanciato in una sintetica traslitterazione dalle implicazioni politiche e morali ("le leggi civili; qui pone l'Italia per cavallo senza signore"; e "men vergogna sarebbe non aver le leggi che avelle e non observalle"); ma sarà il caso di soffermarsi poi sulle notazioni relative al verso 97, per cui si sostiene:

Alberto fu imperadore, figliuolo de lo 'mperadore Ridolfo; il quale Alberto, abbiendo ne la Magna gran patrimonio, no<n> passò mai ne le parti d'Italia.

Motivazione dello sviamento dell'umana *civilitas* viene dunque riconosciuta, concordemente con le posizioni più volte espresse da Dante, nell'avarizia, nella brama di beni temporali dalla quale un vero imperatore, *super partes* in quanto già dominatore dell'ecumene, dovrebbe essere immune: ma la lupa, con la sua fame insaziabile, sembra non risparmiare nessuno, finché un Veltro non verrà a ricacciarla nell'Inferno.

Al verso 100, il commentatore appone poi questa chiosa, relativa alla punizione che aspetta *Alberto tedesco*:

Giusto: l'autor prega Iddio che punisca sì lui, che 'l successore suo n'abbia paura; e così fu, ché dopo poco tempo e' fu tagliato a pezi da un suo nipote inn una nave.

Notizie storiche dunque, anche se può venire il sospetto che siano un po' romanzate; successore di Alberto viene subito dopo indicato in Enrico VII ("Il successor fu Arrigo Lussimborgo, che passò di qua nel 1312 e morì nel 1313"), per il quale viene ovviamente messa in rilievo la brevità dell'azione in suolo italico (da retrodatare però, come inizio, di un paio d'anni).

Qualche notazione storica riguarderà poi le gesta relative alle contese fra i Montecchi e i Cappelletti (correttamente localizzati a Verona, al contrario del commentatore precedentemente esaminato) e le vicende dei conti di Santa Fiora, gli Aldobrandeschi.

Dopo di ciò, sottolineando la giusta necessità che Alberto si vergogni della propria fama se è vero che non scende in Italia "per paura", a c. 14^v il nostro esegeta si slancia, in osservanza al dettato dantesco, verso la dimensione del divino; in riferimento al verso 121 (*O è preparazion . . .*) si scrive infatti:

ciò è, che tu permetti e dai forza ad rei, ché per lor mal fare ne seguiti alcun merito.

Il giudizio umano viene rilevato essere completamente scisso dall'*accorger* divino; questo

del tutto è scisso e rimosso dal cor umano, però ch'è chi vorrebbe vendetta e chi misericordia.

Introducendo la situazione fiorentina al verso 127, proprio all'altezza di tale verso il poeta offre al suo esegeta il destro per sostenere che

qui l'altor, ironicamente parlando, dice questa digressione non s'appartenere ad Firenze, ciò è queste cose;

vengono così proposte tanto considerazioni contenutistiche, quanto stilistico-retoriche, come anche la chiosa successiva conferma, relativamente al verso 139:

Athena: dice qui l'autore riprensoriamente che se Firenze fusse stata al tempo che fu Athena e Lacedemona, due città in Grecia, da le quali li Romani ebbono le prime leggi, i Romani arebbono mandato pe'le leggi a Firenze, e non ad Athena, imperò che sono, le fiorentine leggi, molto più sottili.

Si concludono così le chiose relative al canto VI, lasciandoci materiale di riflessione su vari aspetti, vari modi di affrontare il dettato dantesco, il concatenarsi sistematicamente preordinato delle immagini che il poeta sa evocare, il loro costituirsi in un'opera straordinariamente unitaria e coesa, cosicché (e questo gli esegeti coevi a Dante l'avevano ben compreso) ogni sforzo di chiarimento, per puntuale e focalizzato che sia, ha bisogno, per funzionare come chiave di lettura, di confrontarsi poi con la complessa rete strutturale e polisemica che il genio poetico dantesco ha saputo costituire.

Su un elemento però è necessario riflettere: il ruolo di "riprensore" dei vizi dell'animo umano e di *exemplum* che Dante assume con valenza universale viene sempre implicitamente riconosciuto da commentatori come i due analizzati quanto a uno degli aspetti della problematica politica per come l'autore la pone; se a questo si aggiunge la valenza letteraria e documentaria che comunque i commenti al poema del Trecento e del Quattrocento assumono, si capirà quanto sia importante continuare nel lavoro di riscoperta, recupero e ritrasmissione critica dei numerosi sforzi esegetici che ancora sono nascosti nelle biblioteche.

Appendice

Si ritiene opportuno fornire una descrizione più dettagliata dei due codici dai quali sono state riportate le chiose oggetto della trattazione, e presentare la trascrizione critica dell'intero materiale esegetico relativo al canto VI del *Purgatorio* per come risulta esposto in entrambi i codici conservati nella Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze.

Si avverte che la trascrizione critica delle chiose è stata effettuata se-

condo un cauto ammodernamento grafico che tiene conto delle direttive Barbi-Parodi attualizzate da Antonio Lanza. Sono stati indicati tra parentesi tonde gli scioglimenti di compendio, tra aguzze le integrazioni laddove non sia leggibile il testo; in caso di aporia insanabile, si sono inseriti i tre punti tra aguzze. Tra parentesi quadre iniziali è il verso, o parte di esso, al quale le chiose fanno riferimento; nel caso sia ripetuto un verso, o parte di esso, all'inizio della chiosa, questo è stato messo in corsivo con di séguito, tra parentesi tonde, il numero del verso stesso.

Quanto al primo dei due codici, segnato Pluteo 40.24, si tratta di un manoscritto cartaceo di 289 × 220 mm, di V + 205 + IV' carte; la cantica dell'*Inferno* è compresa tra la c. 2r e la c. 72r, quella purgatoriale è compresa tra la c. 73r e la c. 138r e quella del *Paradiso* tra la c. 139r e la c. 204r.

Proprio su quest'ultima è registrato: "Explicit Purgatorio a dì due marzo 1418", il che ci dice a quale anno risalga anche la trascrizione delle chiose, visto che sono ascrivibili alla stessa mano del testo del poema e ad esso sembrano contemporanee, sempre in *scripta* corsiva, ma di modulo più piccolo.

A c. 204r, ultima scritta, essendo la c. 205 bianca, alla fine del testo del poema compare: "Deo gratias Jova<nn>es Stephanj de Prato traschrissit hunc Dantem mea propria manu annj incarnatione milesimo quattrocientesimo dicimonono", ad attestare la paternità di Giovanni Stefano da Prato, scriba in Otranto; notevole però l'evidente patina linguistica emiliano-romagnola, che caratterizza evidentemente l'esemplare dal quale il copista sta esemplando, e alla quale si sovrappongono numerose forme di area fiorentina.

Purgatorio, VI

[c. 83r] *Rubrica*: "Capitoli VI *Purgatorio*".¹

Quando si parte (v. 1): poi che nel ca(pito)lo precedente l'altor trattò della quarta spezie de' tardi a penitenzia asaliti da morte violenta, ora, consequen(t)emente, in questo sesto ca(pito)lo, dimora ancora in quella medesima materia. E il presente ca(pito)lo si divide in quatro pa(r)ti generali. L'altore trascor(r)e d'alquanti di questi spiriti violentemente morti. Nella seconda dichiara una quistione che nasce circa alla materia dinanzi toca, e introduce spezialmente un singulare spirito della terra di V(ir)gilio

a parlare seco, quivi: *Io cominciai*. Nella terza fa una separazione, di partirsi dalla materia nella quale è; fa una invettiva contra Italia e contro i principali altori della sua disolazione, quivi: *Aha, serva Italia*. Nella qu(ar)ta e ultima fa una invettiva speciale contra Fiorenza, sua patria, quivi: *Firenze mia*.

[v. 1, *Quando si parte*]: questa si è una co(m)parazione che finge l'altore qua(n)do zunse dov'è quelle anime pigre, le quali tutte avendo voglia che di loro si sapesse² fama i(n) questo mondo, e p(er)ò tutte andavano i(n)to(r)no a Dante vedendolo vivo, dicendo ognuna 'Abi a mente me'; e p(er)ò dice: *qua(n)do si pa(r)te*, ciò è 'che sia pregato p(er) me da' miei'.

[v. 13, *quivi era l'aretin*]: questo areti(n) fue uno zudice³ che ssi chiamò mes(ser) Beni(n)casa, mo(r)to da questo Ghi(n) di Tacco, del co<n>tado di Siena, i(m)p(er)ò ch'esendo mes(ser) Beni(n)casa vicario del podestà di Siena, co(n)dan(n)ò⁴ a mo(r)te un fratello di Ghino, il quale ebe nome Teori(n)no, e co(n)dan(n)ò uno zio ca(r)nale del ditto Ghino, ch'ebe nome Tacco, a es(ser) dicapitati, p(er)ché questo Ghino, co(n) certi suoi co(m)pagni, aveano tolto uno castella a' Sanesi e rubavano tutti che passavano di lì p(er) la strada. Ma co(n) tutto che questo Ghino facesse questo, mai no(n) fece morire niuno suo pregione, e mai questo no(n) volle co(n)sentire, co(n) tutto ch'e' fosse fiero e violento. E niente-dimeno pur questo mes(ser) Beni(n)casa fece morire uno suo zio e uno⁵ suo fratello. Onde, essendo poi un'altra fiata mes(ser) Beni(n)casa zudice del Trebuno⁶ di Roma al tempo di papa Bonifazio, lo ditto Ghino andò a Roma e i(n) sulla sala della udienza esendo mes(ser) Beni(n)casa adunato, li⁷ tagliò la testa e pa(r)tissi senza niuno i(m)pedime(n)to. E p(er)ò dice: *l'aretino*.

E l'altro ch'anegò core(n)do (v. 15): costui fu uno⁸ <che> si chiamò Cincio de' tarlari, il quale p(er) la⁹ sco(n)fitta¹⁰ a Mo(n)te Aperto e di Casentino fu p(er)seguitato da quelli di Rondina. Onde, fuggendo, capitò a un fiume p(er) passarlo e 'negovi dent(r)o.

Federigo Novello (v. 17): costui fu figliuolo de' co(n)ti Guidi¹¹ di Cassentino. Costui fu mo(r)to da Fum(m)aiuolo di mes(ser) Alberto da Razo. L'alt(r)o fu Farinata di mes(ser) Marzucò¹² delli Sco(r)nigiani da Pisa, il quale mes(ser) Marzucò fu cavalieri e dottore di leze. Ed essendo ito i(n) Mare(m)ma, e cavalcando p(er) la strada, uno smisurato s(er)pente si fe(r)mò: onde lo cavallo suo si fe(r)mò e lui, p(er) paura, fece voto di farsi frate minore: e così fece. Onde aven<n>e che Farinata, suo figliuolo, fu morto da uno cittadino di Pisa; onde mes(ser) Marzucò (con) li altri frati

minori andorono p(er) lo co(r)po suo. Onde, essendo i(n) chiesa, mes(ser) Marzucò fece uno bello s(er)mone; e p(er)ò p(er) la Sacra Scrittura¹³ e co(n) belli ragioni che ssi dovea p(er)donar l'ofese; e così fece¹⁴ lui, e p(er)donò a colui e lascioll le¹⁵ mani. Ond'e' fê parer il dit<t>o Marzucò forte.

[c. 83v] [v. 28, *I' cominciai*]: seco<n>da pa(r)te, dov'e' descrive una questione che nasce circa alla materia trattata; e introduce i(n) speciale uno singulare spirito de la ter<r>a di Vergilio a parlar seco e *sine fata dei flecti sperare precando*. Qui muove un dubio Dante a V(ir)gilio: e par che V(ir)gilio, p(er) uno suo libro, dica che 'l p(r)egar p(er) l'anime passate¹⁶ di questa vita sia vano a p(r)egar p(er) loro; e questo muove l'altore p(er) le ditte ani(m)e: pregono pur Dante ch'e' faciono p(r)ega(r) p(er) loro. E p(er)ò dice: "Sarebe lor speranza vana,¹⁷ o no(n) m'è il ditto¹⁸ tuo ben manifesto?"; e V(ir)gilio risponde: "La mia scrittura è piana", ciò è ape(r)ta, e questi tali che sperano no(n) fallano, imp(er)ò che qua(n)do V(ir)gilio scrisse quel punto parlava dell'ani(m)e dan(n)ate. Ma chi è i(n) Purgatorio puote avere tal che prega p(er) lui che sarà sì nella grazia di Dio che quello ch'e' <de>ve patire i(n) cento an(n)i lo può patire i(n) unu(m) punto; e questo vuol la grazia divina, come dice la Sacra Scrittura e <. . .> Dio p(er) molti esempri di (Crist)o I(es)ù.

[v. 51, *e vedi omai che 'l poggio l'ombra getta*]: ciò è, ch'era tramo(n)tato il sole e già Dante era stato un dì i(n) Purgatorio.¹⁹

Noi anderem co(n) questo gio(r)no (v. 52): imp(er)ò chi vuol andar alla penitenza, di notte no(n) la trova; e questi sono assimigliati alli ignoranti e sconossie(n)ti. E poi agiugne: *Prima che sia là su to(r)nar vedrai*; ciò <è>, 'che 'na(n)zi che co(m)piemo di cercar', i(dest), 7° balzo del Purgatorio, 'vedrai un'alt(r)a volta rito(r)nar il sole da Oriente'.

[v. 61, *Venim<m>o a llei*]: qui mostra l'altore com'e' sia p(er)venuto alla qui(n)ta spezie de' negligenti, <c'hanno> i(n)dugiato la lor penite(n)zia p(er) cagione della cura familiare, o d'alcuno loro asercizio di studio di scienza. De' quali mette ch'e' fosse So(r)dello, com'e' seguita, il qual fece uno libro che ssi chiama *Tesoro de' Tesori*; e fue savissimo homo, e p(er)ò dice: 'Mostrane la miglior salita, over via, d'andare al Purgatorio'.

[c. 84r] [v. 76, *Ahi, serva Italia*]: terzia pa(r)te, dov'e' fa una digressione, ciò è si pa(r)te dalla materia, nella qual fa una i(n)vettiva contra Italia e cont(r)a i principali altori della sua disolazione. Questa Italia è una parte d'Europia, e, possedata già da' Greci, fu chiamata "la Gra(n)de Grecia"; e poi possedata da Italo, re di Cicilia, lo quale lasciò Cicilia e ven(n)e abitare

in Italia: e da lui p(er)ese quel nome. La quale Italia è più lunga che larga, e ste(n)desi dall'Occidente comi(n)ciando dalla P(r)ovenza e dall'Alpe di Mo(n)te Ape(n)nino, che cingono Italia da Occidente e comi(n)ciano tra Niza e Saona. E l'uno de' brac<c>i delle ditte Alpi di Mo(n)te Ape(n)nino si stende p(er) mezo Italia. E li mo(n)ti Silici son te(r)mini della fine di Pannonia i(n)fino al fiume Adda; e co(n)giugnesi con essa Istria di v(er)so l'Oriente i(n)fino a Reggio, il quale è rimpetto alla Cicilia: e a(n)co la Cicilia si dice es(ser) d'Italia; e dove è la ter<r>a di Reg(g)io finisce, e stende(n)si i(n)v(er)so tra Settentrione e Levante: come lo brac<c>io della mano i(n)v(er)so il gom(m)ito, così Reggio i(n)v(er)so la mano, e qui(n)di si stende i(n)fino al go(m)bito, e quivi è Taranto, e quivi è lo mare chiamato "Golfo di Vineg(g)ia", overo "Adriano", da i(n)di i(n)giuso i(n)fino a Vinegia; e lo di<t>to go(r)fo è di sop(r)a p(er) gra(n)pa(r)te i(n)v(er)so Oriente e mezo de lo mare Ionio. E p(er) largeza si stende da' co(n)fini della Fra(n)cia p(er) gra(n)de parte, ciò è dall'Alpe sop(r)adette i(n)fino al mare Ter(r)eno, i(n)verso l'Oriente, ciò è da Vinegia i(n)susò i(n)fino al mare detto, overo Golfo Adriano, di verso Settentrione e lo mare Te(r)reno di v(er)so mezo di, i(m)p(er)ò che lla Sicilia ha di sopra lo mare Ionio, e i(n)v(er)so l'Occidente è lo mare Ter(r)eno. E dice sì che Italia<. .> p(r)ovi(n)ce; e la p(ri)ma è Vinegia, nella quale sono queste cittadi: Vicenza, Verona e Mantova; da pa(r)te Lomba(r)dia, Melano e Pavvia e altri cittadi; al fine della Francia <. .>za si chiamano.

Ahi, s(er)va (v. 76): qui dimostra l'altore come Italia, p(er) l'odio e per i vizii d'Italiani,²⁰ no(n) merita es(ser) più don(n)na, ma più tosto d'i bo(r)delli, i quali sono luoghi molti sozi e disonesti. E questo dice ché, mentro che Italiani regevano Italia (con) giustizia e co(n) ragione e stendevo(n)si co' Romani nelli atti virtuosi, erano liberi; mo, p(er) li vizi loro, sì ch'e' sono s(er)vi ai peccati e sono s(er)vi alli tira(n)ni ch'og<g>i sono i(n)n Italia, e più ne erano al tempo di Dante. E p(er)ò dice: *Ahai, s(er)va Italia*. E vuol dire: 'Vedi se dalle prode', ciò è, 'se²¹ dalle marine p(er) fino alla ter(r)a se tu hai pace, e vedrai che no'. 'Che giovò che Iustiniano i(m)peradore co(r)eggesse le leg<g>i co(n) che si gove(r)na la replubica, se lla sella è²² vòta?'; ciò è: 'Che ti giova, ché no(n) lassi sedere l'impero nella sua sedia?'.

Ahi, gente (v. 91): 'Che vui italiani dovereste es(ser)e ubidienti allo ('m)perio, e sareste i(n) buono stato e senza gue<r>re, e così sederebe Cesere nella sella'. E qui aduce l'esempio di (Crist)o p(er) lo *Evangelio*: "Date quello ch'è di Dio a Dio, e quello ch'è di Cesere a Cesere". Se-

guita: *O Alberto tedesco*, dice l'altore, *giusto giudizio dalle stelle cagia*, 'però che tu e tuo padre avete guasto il bel gia(r)dino d'Italia per avarizia:²³ per non lasciare il ducato di Starliche, no(n) siete venuti a sigiucare Italia e governalla co(n) giustizia e co(n) pace, e avetela lasciata i(n) guerra e guasture; e p(er)ò sarebe di bisogno che llo giudizio di Dio venisse sop(r)a di voi'.

[c. 84v] [v. 106, *Vieni a veder Montechi e Capelletti*]: in questi v(er)si l'altore i(n)voca: 'O Alberto, vieni e vedi i tuoi difetti p(er) no(n) aver cura di gove(r)nar l'imp(er)io'. *Montechi e Capelletti*: questi furono due parti i(n) Cremona, le quali si disfeceno p(er) loro nimicizia.

Monaldi e Filippeschi (v. 107): questi furono due altre parti i(n) Ancona, le quali, al te(m)po di Dante, vivevano i(n) gra(n) sospetto. Ov'e' dice: 'O Alberto, uo(m) senza cura, ché vedevi gustar le tter<r>e e no(n) te ne curavi'.

[v. 109, *Vieni, crude!*]: qui dice Da(n)te: 'Vieni tu, Albe(r)to, e vedi la p(r)esura', ciò è, 'vedi il gravamento che fan(n)o i tuoi conti, e ma(r)chesi, e li altri signori, ai loro sudditi; vieni e cura lor magagne', ciò è: 'p(er)ò vedi tu ch'e' no(n) sia'. 'Vieni e vedi, Alberto, la tua Roma', i(m)p(er)ò ch'e' dice il vero, che llo i(m)peradore è re d'i Romani, 'e di e notte piagne', i(m)p(er)ò ch'essendo opp(r)esati i Romani dai lor cittadini, e maltrattati, facie(n) sì, ed è²⁴ vedova, i(m)p(er)ò che l'i(m)perio è suo sposo, 'e tu l'abandoni, e p(er)ò è vedova'. E qui pa(r)la i(n) figura di Roma: 'Cesare mio', i(m)p(er)ò che tutti l'imperadori si chiamavano Cesari, dal p(ri)mo Cesare, 'p(er)ché m'<abb>a(n)doni, p(er)ché no(n) stai meco?'. E séguita: 'E se pietà no(n) ti mo<r>de d'Italiani, vieni e vergognati almeno, ché p(er) avarizia ti stai nelle pa(r)ti della Magna e lasci guastare Italia, gia(r)dino dello i(m)perio'. Séguita.

E se licito m'è (v. 118): qui usa l'altore un modo come si volesse doler di Dio, ma no(n) è, e p(er)ò dice: *Se licito m'è*, i(m)p(er)ò che no(n)n è licito, o som(m)o Giove, i(dest), Iddio, i(m)p(er)ò che tanto vuol dire Giove qua(n)to aiutatore, e p(er)ò sta bene questo vocabolo²⁵ a dDio, ch'E' ben puòaiutare. E p(er)ch'e' no(n) si possa pigliar e(r)rore, però²⁶ dice *p(er) noi crocifisso*, i(m)p(er)ò che i pagani ebono uno dio che ssi chiamò Giove. E p(er)ò dice: 'P(er) noi crocifisso i(n) terra', i(dest), (Crist)o I(es)ù. Séguita: *O è p(r)eparazione*,²⁷ quasi dica: 'Idio vede tutto, e tutto fa buo(n) fine: forse lasci tu guastare Italia p(er) alcun altro bene'. Séguita: 'Ogni vilano dive(n)ta un Marcello'.²⁸ Costui fu un romano di poca co(n)di-zione, e, p(er) parlare male della co(n)traria pa(r)te, si fece molto grande;

o(n)de séguita l'altore: 'Ogni villano che va partegia(n)do dive(n)ta un Ma(r)cello, e così si guasta Italia'. Ség<ui>ta.

[v. 127, *Fiorenza mia*]: quarta e ultima pa(r)te, dov'e' fae una invvettiva speciale (con)tra Fiorenza sua patria.

Fiorenza mia (*ibidem*):²⁹ i(n) questi versi l'altore usa una rettorica che mostra il contrario di quel che comi(n)cia: *Fiorenza mia*,³⁰ ben puo' es(er) conte<nta>. Ciò vuol dire: 'Ben puo' star malcontenta di questa digres-sion', *i(dest)*, di pa(r)tirsi dalla materia usata, di parti(r)si³¹ di trattar d'Italia e dello 'mperadore, dov'e' séguita: *mercè del popolo tuo*; e questo s'i(n)-te<n>de p(er) contrario, ch'e' no(n) s'argome(n)ta (con)tro ai cittadini ch'usano tira(n)nia i(n) disfarli, no(n) piglia a(r)gome(n)to. *Molti han(n)o giustizia nel cuore*, ma no(n) la dimostrano p(er) paura; *senza consiglio*, iusti-zia,³² *ma 'l popolo tuo l'ha i(n) som(m)o*.³³ *della bocca*, *i(dest)*, i Fiorentini, e gridano giustizia, ma dentro han(n)o i(n)giustizia. *Molti rif<i>utano lo com<un>e i(n)ca(r)co*, p(er) un atto d'ipocresia, p(er) meglio poter rubare. *Or ti fa' lieta*, 'tu Fiorenza', p(er) lo contrario; e 'fatti lieta', ciò è, 'a' tu' stati, c'hai ben di che'. *Tu ricca*, p(er) lo co(n)trario: benché alcuni vi sia ricchi, no(n) la comune gente. *Tu co(n) pace*, p(er) contrario: 'Sempre stai i(n) guer<r>a, dent(r)o e di fuori'. *Tu co(n) f(r)eno*, p(er) contrario, i(m)-però che dove s'usa arroganza no(n) v'è sen(n)o. Questo che séguita a<. . .>ile, dov'e' dice: *S'i' dico il vero, l'afetto lo mostra*. Atene e Lacede-mona sono³⁴ due città i(n) Grecia, nelle quali erano molto sen(n)o, e molto pugnorono i(n)sieme, e feciono molti legii molto civili e belle; onde l'altore vuol dire: 'Voi no(n) faceste così, ma avete fatti vostri statuti e leggi', i quali mette p(er) figura che no(n) durono da ottobre a mezo novemb(re), quasi dica: 'Ché i(n) poco tempo li rompeste'.

[c. 85r] [v. 145, *Quante volte*]: 'Quante volte ha' tu, Fiorenza, fatto nuove legi e costumi e no(n) han<n>o aùto posa, come fa la 'nfe(r)ma i(n) sulle piume, che no(n) trova posa'.



Il secondo dei codici in esame, segnato Pluteo 90 sup. 130, è intera-mente cartaceo; misura 292 × 216 mm ed è costituito dalle carte III + 82 + III'; il testo della cantica purgatoriale è compreso tra la c. 2r e la c. 81v; è presente una numerazione moderna a lapis nel margine superiore destro, da 2 a 81, mentre saltuariamente compare (solitamente incompleta per raffilatura) un'antica numerazione a inchiostro sul margine inferiore

destro: tale numerazione, partendo da cifre elevate, testimonia come le carte in esame siano parte di un più consistente manoscritto, che presumibilmente avrà contenuto l'intera *Commedia*.

Genericamente attribuito alla seconda metà del XIV secolo, ha la filigrana a centro pagina raffigurante un arco con centro in cocca di 73 × 80 mm, simile a Briquet 797; i dati relativi alla *scripta*, una *littera* cancelleresca bastarda sia per il testo, in una colonna con iniziali di terzina sporgente, che per le chiose interlineari e marginali, di modulo più piccolo, portano alla collocazione verso la fine del secolo, e testimoniano la presenza di un'unica mano; il commento risente, al suo interno, di direttive fortemente (e spesso rigidamente) allegorizzanti, come è tipico di buona parte dell'esegesi trecentesca.

La koiné d'appartenenza, in virtù dei frequenti raddoppiamenti fonosintattici e di certe forme caratterizzanti, è facilmente riconducibile all'area fiorentina (cfr. c. 12v, *che e' dica*; c. 13v, *frategli*; c. 14r, *dove e' trattava*; c. 14v, *e' si rizò*; *Ninferno*; c. 15v, *dàgli contra*; c. 16r, *quegli è*; c. 18v, *gli era sera*; c. 19r, *fece essercito contra Pisani, e molto gl'impedì*, ecc.).

I fascicoli costitutivi sono 6, e va considerato che manca la carta iniziale (I¹⁶⁻¹; II-V¹⁶; VI²); le cc. 1 e 82 sono bianche.

A c. 2r troviamo una *Rubrica* iniziale ("Qui comi(n)cia la seco(n)da ca(n)tica di Dante Alleghieri, ciò è *Purgatorio*. Incomi(n)cia q(ui) il p(ri)mo capitolo"); a c. 81v si trova invece l'*Explicit*: "finita la seconda cantica, ciò è *Purgaro*, di Dante Alleghier fiorentino. Amen".

***Purgatorio*, VI**

[c. 13v] [v. 1, Quando]: Canto sesto, nel qual tratta di que' medesimi spirti raccomandandosi a D(ante), nominando alqua(n)ti spirti. Ed essi, partiti da lloro, trovarono un cittadin di Ma(n)tova chiamato Sordello, il qual fece loro molto onore; p(er) lo trovam(en)to del quale ispirto l'autore fa una bella digressione, e massima <me(n)te> co(n)tra Firenze.

[v. 5, *qual*]: *comp(ar)at(i)o*.

Quiv'era (v. 13): l'autore induce q(ui) uno spirto, *i(dest)* mess(er) Boninsegna d'Arezo, il quale, essendo podestà di Siena, con consentime(n)to de' co(n)ti da S(ant)a Fiore, sba(n)dì e tolse e misse i beni i(n) comune di Ghino di Tacco e del fratello, i quali era(n) sanesi. Veggendosi costoro i(m)poveriti, andaron co(n) certi altri sbanditi e tolsono un castello a la

Chiesa; e q(ui)vi rubava(n) chi vi passava. P(er) la qual cosa fu preso il fratel di Ghino da famiglia del d(ett)o mess(er) Boni(n)segna e data la sentenza. Da³⁵ le forche ebbe a dire il condannato³⁶ q(ue)ste parole: “Ta(n)to stessee l’a(n)i(m)a mia i(n) Purgatoro q(uan)to la tua³⁷ ti starà i(n) corpo”; di che egli, uscito di Signoria, pe(n)sa(n)do a queste parole, se n’a(n)do i(n) corte del p(a)p(a). Vole(n)dosi Ghino³⁸ vendicare, vestito³⁹ come povero, nel palagio dove questo mess(er) Bo(nin)segna stava chie-de(n)do elemosina, al d(ett)o Bo(nin)segna gli diè d’un coltello e ucciselo. Ultimatam(en)te con una spada a tutti si fece far luogo e andossi co(n) Dio.

E l’altro (v. 15): l’autore induce q(ui) uno spirto al quale fuggendo d’una sconfitta ch’ebbono i Bostoli co’ Tarlati, si messe p(er) Arno e affogò; il quale ebbe nome Cino, e fu questo ar<.>ndole.

Quivi (v. 16): q(ui) d(ice) l’autor ch’e’ trovò⁴⁰ Federigo Novello, figliuol del co(n)te Guido Novello, el qual Fede<rigo> fu morto da uno d’i Bostoli co(m)battendo eglino co’ Tarlati.

E quel (v. 17): q(ui) dice come un pisano il p(re)gava, il quale fu figliuolo d’uno chiamato Marzucco, il quale il co(n)te Ugolino, sig(no)re di Pisa, fece i(m)piccare, coma(n)dando che da p(er)son)a no(n) fusse spiccato. Di che Marzucco suo padre andò al co(n)te Ugol(ino) dice(n)do: “Deh, fate soppelir quel poverello, acciò ch’e’ no(n) corrompa l’aria!”; di che ’l co(n)te Ugol(ino), veggendo la forteza e costanzia sua, gliel co(n)cedette. E p(er)ò dice “forte”, ciò è “costante”.

Vidi cont’Orso (v. 19): q(ui) dice ch’e’ vide conte⁴¹ de la Valle di Bisenzio, il qual fu morto da due suo frategli, i q(ua)li Da(n)te puose nel centro dell’Inferno, tra’ traditori.

E l’a(n)i(m)a divisa (ibidem): q(ui) d(ice) ch’e’ vide un barone di Carlo, re di Fra(n)cia, al qual era molto ben voluto; p(er) la qual cosa, p(er) i(n)vidia certi baroni l’abbominarono al Re ch’e’ volle sforzar la don(n)a sua, e ordinaro co(n) la reina che ella confessasse⁴² così ess(er)e, di che finalm(en)te il Re il fece impiccare. E avea nome, questo Barone, Pier da la Broccia; e anche si scusò a D(ante) come non v’era colpevole. E d(ice) a Dante ch’e’ si p(ro)veggia co(n) penitenza del d(ett)o peccato ch’ella (com)misse (contro) lui, s’ella no(n) vuole andare a p(er)dime(n)to.

[v. 20, *i(n)veggia*]: *i(dest)*, *i(n)vidia*.

[v. 22, *proveggia*]: *i(dest)*, *pente(n)do* del d(ett)o peccato.

La don(n)a (v. 23): la qual era⁴³ figliuola del re di Braba(n)te, e moglie del re di Fra(n)cia.

[v. 29, in alcun testo]: *v(idelicet) u(ti) i(n) eius libro Eneidos d(icens): "Desine fata deu(m) flecti sp(er)are p(re)ca(n)do"*.⁴⁴

[c. 14r] *Ché cima* (v. 37): d(ice) qui che la pena data da Dio a que' di Purgatorio p(er) niun modo si scema. Ma, dicendo così, la divina gra(zia) ha fermo e ordinato che uno, p(er) suo peccato, stia a purgarsi cinq(uan)ta anni, ad meno che uno fa tanto ben per lui ch'e' no(n) vi sta altro che un an(n)o. Dunq(ue) par che Dio no(n) abbia detto il vero, p(er)ò che co(n) ciò sia cosa ch'e' debba stare L anni e no(n) vi stia altre ch'uno. P(er) lui è fatto ta(n)to bene che è eq(ui)valente al d(ett)o tempo, come a dire così non vale ta(n)to si debba⁴⁵ dare a uno X fior(ini) di q(ui) a dieci dì, ogni dì uno: s'io gliel dessi oggi tutti, q(uan)to s'io gli dessi uno fior(ino) il dì di q(ui) a dieci dì. Certo sì.

E là dov'io (v. 40): l'autor Vergilio fe(r)mò q(ue)sto pu(n)to e q(ue)stione nel sesto libro dell'*Eneida*, dove e' trattava⁴⁶ dell'Inferno, p(er)ò che a que' d'Inferno no(n) val p(r)ego.

[*ibidem, fermai cotesto punto*]: p(er)ò ch'egli 'l fermò q(ui)vi, qu(ando) Enea, menato da la Sibilla, andò in Inferno trattando di Palinuro, il qual, essendo nocchier de Enea, addorm(en)ta(n)dosi cadde i(n) mare.

Veram(en)te (v. 43): qui, tacitame(n)te, riprende Virgilio chi insegnando alcuna arte si vergognano, dov'e' non intendono di ma(n)dar gli uditori i(n) quella p(ar)te a chi sa più di lui; e dice a D(ante) che de la predetta q(ue)stione domandi Beatrice, ciò è i teologi, imp(er)ò che i(n) quella arte Virg(ilio) non era erudito come bisognava.

Che lume (v. 45): d(ice) ch'e' sarà lume e chiaro tra 'l vero de la detta cosa e lo 'ntelletto, come⁴⁷ si vede p(er) esempi. Se tra 'l veder, ciò è l'occhio, e la cosa che si vuol vedere, è chiaro e lume, la cosa si vede; ma se no(n) v'è chiara, no. Così essa teologia farà lume t(r)a lo 'ntelletto e 'l vero, ciò è lo 'ntelletto tuo potrà allora (com)prendere meglio il vero d'essa cosa e q(ue)stione f(att)a.

[v. 54, *stanzi*]: *i(dest)*, credi.

[v. 56, *colui*]: il sole.

[v. 58, *un'anima*]: l'autore induce q(ui) uno spirito p(er) aver cagione di fare una digressione.

[c. 14v] [v. 72, *Ma(n)tova*]: ciò è, vole(n)do⁴⁸ dire com'egli era da Ma(n)-tova, i(n)nanzi ch'e' co(m)piessi di dire, e' si rizò e abbracciollo.

[*ibidem, romita*]: racolta.

[v. 73, *surse*]: andò.

Sordello (v. 74): fu buon dittator, e fu barone di quello Azolino del quale

l'autor tratta nel XII⁴⁹ cap(itol)o di Ninferno. Il qual Sordello si dice che, volendo andare a la sirocchia di questo Azolino p(er) disonesto amore, aveva a passare p(er) un certo luogo molto brutto d'acqui e altre cose brutte. P(er) andare a la camera p(re)d(ett)a faceva scalzare q(ui)vi un ragazzo che 'l passasse. Saputo q(ue)sto, Azolino ordinò col ragazzo che 'l passava ch'e' no(n) v'andasse e, in iscambio di quel ragazzo, il passò senza dir nulla. Ma q(ua)n(do) Sordello ritornò va(n)tandosi di costei, Azolino gli disse così, e, volendogli gra(n) bene, no(n) gli fece male, ma diss'egli: "Bastiti quel che tu hai fatto! No(n) ci tornar più". Di che costei il richiese altre volte, ma 'l detto Sordello, p(er) no(n) dispiacere al suo signore e p(er) non ess(er) giunto in simile peccato, si partì da Azolino; e credesi ch'e' fu morto, p(er)ché l'autore il pone tra coloro che p(er) forza fûr morti.

[v. 76, *Ahi, s(er)va Italia*]: qui comincia a fare una diggressione v(er)so Italia, dicendo del mal stato d'Italia.

[*ibidem, ostello*]: i(dest), hospitiu(m).

[v. 77, *sanza nocchiere*]: imp(er)ò che ma(n)ca di rettore.

[v. 82, i(n) te]: Italia.

[v. 85, *le p(ro)de*]: ciò è Genova, Vinegia, la Puglia.

[v. 86, i(n) seno]: nel mezo.

[v. 88, *il freno*]: i(dest), le leggi civili. Q(ui) pone l'Italia p(er) cavallo.

[v. 89, *Giustiniano*]: imp(er)adore; [*ibidem, vòta*]: senza sig(no)re.

[v. 90, *sanze'sso*]: fren<o>; [*ibidem, la vergogna meno*]: q(ui) d(ice): "Men vergog(n)a sarebbe non aver le leggi che avelle e no(n) oss(er)valle".

[c. 15r] [v. 91, *Ahi, gente*]: Dante, in un suo libro che si chiama *La Monarchia*, tiene che tutto il mo(n)do debba ubbidire a due sig(no)ri, ciò è lo 'mp(er)adore e 'l papa. Lo 'mp(er)adore si debba ubbidire i(n) cose t(em)-p(o)rali, ma 'l papa i(n) cose spirituali. E su(m)me l'argum(en)to da (Crist)o, il quale, e(ss)endo doma(n)dato da' Farisei, ave(n)do un denaio, dice(n)do: "Che imagine è q(ue)sta", rispuose: "*Ea que su(n)t Cesaris reddant(ur) Cesari, que v(er)o sunt Dei reddantur Deo, et c(etera)*".

[v. 92, *Cesare*]: ciò è, lo 'mp(er)adore; [*ibidem, i(n) la sella*]: e sig(no)reggiare.

[v. 94, *fiera*]: i(dest), Italia.

[v. 96, *p(r)edella*]: ciò è, beni pat(ri)moniali; "predella" si deriva da q(ue)sto nome p(re)diu(m).

Alberto (v. 97): fu imp(er)ado(re), figliuolo de lo 'mp(er)adore Ridolfo.

Il quale Alberto, abbiendo ne la Magna gran pat(ri)monio, nopassò mai ne le parti d'Italia.

[v. 98, *costei*]: Italia.

[v. 99, *inforcar li suo arcioni*]: ciò è, signoreggiare Italia.⁵⁰

Giusto (v. 100): l'autor p(r)ega Iddio ch'E' punisca sì lui che 'l successor suo n'abbia paura. E così fu, ché dopo poco te(m)po e' fu tagliato a pezi da un suo nipote in una nave.

[v. 102, *successor*]: il successor fu Arrigo Lussimborgo,⁵¹ che passò di qua nel 1312 e morì nel 1313.

[v. 103, *tu*]: Alberto; [*ibidem*, 'l tuo padre]: mess(er) Ridolfo.

[v. 104, *costretti*⁵²]: p(er) lo patrimonio.

[v. 105, 'l giardin de llo 'mp(er)io]: i(dest), Italia.

[v. 106, *Mo(n)tecchi e Cappelletti*]: veronesi. Montecchi e Cappelletti furono due famiglie di Verona le quali cacciarono il Marchese da Esti di signoria e presolla p(er) loro. Poi il Marchese fece suo sforzo e⁵³ cacciogli di sig(no)ria e dispersigli.

[v. 107, *Monaldi*]: da Orbiveto; [*ibidem*, *uomo senza cura*]: o Alberto.

[v. 108, *color*]: i(dest), Mo(n)tecchi et c(etera); [*ibidem*, *questi*]: i(dest), Monaldi et c(etera).

[v. 111, *Santa Fior*]: i(dest), conti di; [*ibidem*, *com'è sicura*]: d(ice) l'autore che i co(n)ti di Santa Fiore era(n) sicuri, imp(er)ò che aveano molte castella, le quali furono poi lor tolte dal Comune di Siena.

[v. 113, *Cesare*]: i(dest), imp(er)adore.

[v. 116, *tu veder*⁵⁴]: ciò è, che si dice che tu, i(m)p(er)adore, lasci p(er) paura che tu no(n) passi di qua.

[v. 119, *ochi*]: occhi.

[c. 15v] [v. 121, *è*⁵⁵ *preparazion*]: ciò è, che p(er)metti e dai forza⁵⁶ ad rei acciò che p(er) lor mal fare ne seguiti alcun merito.

[v. 123, *in*⁵⁷ *tutto*]: dal tutto è scisso e rimosso dal cor regger umano, p(er)ò che chi vorrebbe vendetta e chi mis(er)icordia.

[v. 125, *Marcel*]: uomo. Marcello⁵⁸ fu un co(n)sigliar romano, il quale, prima che Cesare fusse signore, sempre era p(ri)mo a tutte le cose a dagli contra. F(att)o Cesare signore, Ma(r)cello fu sbandito, ma poi, dopo alcuno tempo, Cesare il ribandì, sì che ogni villan che in niuno ufficio dice e spregia lo 'mp(er)io come Marcello, ver'è che egli era chiamato Marco Marcello.

[v. 126, *p(ar)teggiando viene*]: s(cilicet), i(n) uffici.

[v. 128, *digression*]: qui l'autor, iro<ni>cam(en)te parlando, dice questa diggressio(n)e no(n) s'appartenere ad Firenze, ciò è q(ue)ste cose.

[v. 134, *sollecito risponde*]: dicendo: "I' sono atto al tale uficio".

[v. 135, *chiamare*]: elegg(er)e.

Athena (v. 139): d(ice) q(ui) l'autore ripre(n)soriam(e)n te che se Firenze fusse stata al tempo che fu Athena e Lacedemona, due città i(n) Grecia, da le quali i Romani ebbono le p(ri)me leggi,⁵⁹ i Romani arebbono mandato pe'le leggi a Firenze e no(n) ad Athena, i(m)p(er)ò che sono le fiorentine leggi molto più sottili.

[v. 142, *te*]: Fire(n)ze; [*ibidem*, *sottili*]: i(*dest*), leggi e statuti.

[v. 145, *che rime(m)bre*]: i(*dest*), che ti ricordi.

[v. 147, *me(m)bre*]: i(*dest*), uficiali.⁶⁰

Florence, Italy

NOTE

1. Segue, a rigo nuovo: *testo*.
2. Cod. *sapessa*.
3. La *z* ricorretta su precedente *g*.
4. Segue, a fine rigo, *uno*, come anticipazione indebita e tralasciata.
5. Cod. *I'*.
6. Cod. *Tarebuno*.
7. Cod. *la*.
8. Cod. *I'*.
9. La *a* supplita nell'interlinea superiore.
10. Segue *ap* biffato.
11. Prima: *de conte Guidi*, ripetuto con la lieve variante.
12. La finale *ucho* è pasticciata per espansione dell'inchiostro.
13. Le ultime due lettere supplite nell'interlinea superiore.
14. Cod. *foce*.
15. Già anticipato a fine rigo, ma scolorito.
16. Cod. *passete*.
17. La prima *a* su ricorrezione.
18. Cod. *ditte*.
19. *-torio* supplito nell'interlinea superiore a fine rigo.
20. Seguono due lettere biffate.
21. Cod. *ve*.
22. Cod. *et*.
23. La prima *i* ricorretta su precedente *a*.
24. Cod. *et de*.
25. Cod. *vocabole*.
26. Cod. *poro*.
27. Cod. *p(r)eperazio(n)ne*.
28. Sul margine destro del verso 125, *e un Marcel*, con un richiamo si appunta: *e un Bargel*.
29. Cod. *mio*. Un richiamo rimanda a fondo pagina.

30. Cod. *mio*, ma *mia* a testo.
31. Cod. *parti(r)sa*.
32. Nell'interlinea superiore: *alit(er) senza giustizia*.
33. Segue *ma (n)no* biffato.
34. Prima, a fine rigo, *furono* biffato.
35. La *d* supplita nell'interlinea superiore.
36. Queste ultime due parole supplite nel margine destro nell'interlinea superiore.
37. La *-a* supplita nell'interlinea superiore, a fine rigo.
38. Cod. *Dino*.
39. Cod. *vestisto*, ma con la seconda *s* biffata.
40. Segue lettera biffata a fine rigo.
41. La *-e* supplita nell'interlinea superiore.
42. Cod. *confeffesso*.
43. Cod. *ere*.
44. Questa chiosa è di modulo più piccolo in *scripta* libraria.
45. Seguito da *gg* biffato, e con la *-a* pasticciata.
46. La *t*- ricorretta su *d*- espunta, con inserimento nell'interlinea superiore e segno di richiamo in quella inferiore.
47. La *c*- ricorretta su *v*-.
48. La *v*- ricorretta su *n*-.
49. Cod. *XII*°.
50. Prima una *h* biffata.
51. Cod. *Luximborgo*, con la *x* ricorretta su precedente *ç*.
52. La *co*- supplita nell'interlinea superiore su *di*- espunta.
53. Prima un'altra *e* espunta.
54. Cod. *vender*, con la *n* espunta; si consideri la presenza di *veder* due versi prima, per capire come può esser nata questa lezione od errore.
55. Supplita nell'interlinea superiore.
56. Cod. *forta*.
57. Supplito nell'interlinea superiore: *dal*.
58. La *c* supplita nell'interlinea superiore, con segno di richiamo in quella inferiore.
59. La *-i* ricorretta su *-e*.
60. Segue, sul margine destro dei vv. 149–150, una linea verticale dietro la quale si annota: “*co<m>p(arati)o*”. Al verso 151, sulla lezione *scema*, si interviene con una *h* supplita nell'interlinea superiore e una ricorrezione tra *e* e *m*.

American Dante Bibliography for 2001

CHRISTOPHER KLEINHENZ

This bibliography is intended to include all the Dante translations published in North America in 2001 and all Dante studies and reviews published in 2001 that are in any sense North American. The latter criterion is construed to include foreign reviews of North American publications pertaining to Dante. The listing of reviews in general is selective, particularly in the case of studies bearing only peripherally on Dante.

Items cited from *Dissertation Abstracts International* are generally registered with brief citations from the official abstract. The short notes published in the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America* (<http://www.princeton.edu/~dante/ebdsa.html>) are listed without commentary. Items not recorded in the bibliographies for previous years are entered as addenda to the present list.

Generally, the citation of an individual study from a collected volume representing several authors is given in brief, while the main entry of the volume is listed with full bibliographical data in its proper place in the alphabetical order. Issues of this journal under the former title *Annual Report of the Dante Society* continue to be cited in the short form of *Report*, with volume number.

Special thanks go to the team of associate bibliographers who have assumed responsibility for the annotation of many of the items listed herein. The Society is very grateful to the following scholars for their invaluable expertise and for their continuing contributions to the journal: Fabian Alfie (The University of Arizona), V. Stanley Benfell (Brigham Young University), Gary P. Cestaro (DePaul University), Cristiana For-

dyce (Brown University), Jessica Levenstein (New York City), Joseph Luzzi (Bard College), Michael Papio (Holy Cross University), Alessandro Vettori (Rutgers University), and Lawrence Warner (National Humanities Center, Australia). (Their initials follow their abstracts.)

Studies

Alfie, Fabian. *Comedy and Culture: Cecco Angiolieri's Poetry and Late Medieval Society*. Leeds: Northern Universities Press, 2001. vi, 216 p. (Italian Perspectives, 7)

Contents: Acknowledgements (vi); Introduction. The Trouble with Cecco: The 'State of the Question' and Difficulties Inherent in a Study of Angiolieri (1–17); I. Comedy and Culture: Cecco Angiolieri and the Comic Traditions (19–43); II. Love and Literature: Cecco Angiolieri's Relationship with the Amorous Lyric Traditions (45–81); III. Poverty and Poetry: Cecco Angiolieri's Position in the Evolution of a Vernacular Trope (83–113); IV. Insult and Injury: Vituperium in the Poetry of Cecco Angiolieri (115–143); V. Cecco, Simone, Dante and Guelfo: Correspondence among Angiolieri's Poetry (145–163); VI. Fact or Fiction: Cecco Angiolieri's Poetic Self-Presentation (165–192); Bibliography (193–209); Index of References to Angiolieri's Sonnets (211–212); General Index (213–216).

Audeh, Aida. "Rodin's *Gates of Hell*: Sculptural Illustration of Dante's *Divine Comedy*." In *Magnificent Obsession: The Rodin Collection of Iris and B. Gerald Cantor*, exhibit catalogue (London: Merrell Holberton Publishers, 2001), pp. 92–125.

Detailed analysis of Rodin's *Gates of Hell* and related sculptures with constant reference to and consideration of the direct associations they have to Dante's *Comedy*.

Auden, W. H. "From *The Vision of Eros*." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 136–143.

Barolini, Teodolinda. *Desire and Death, or Francesca and Guido Cavalcanti: Inferno 5 in its Lyric Context*. Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, 2001. 50 p. (Bernardo Lecture Series, No. 9)

"Explores the lyric context of *Inferno* 5, paying particular attention to

how Italian lyric poets like Giacomo da Lentini, Guido delle Colonne, Guittone d'Arezzo, Guido Cavalcanti, and Dante himself had framed the issue of desire insufficiently controlled by reason. Pointing to Cavalcanti's 'che la 'ntenzione per ragione vale' (from 'Donna me prega') as the inter-text of Dante's 'che la ragion sommettono al talento' (*Inferno* 5.39), Barolini reads *Inferno* 5 as a response to Cavalcanti. Moreover, by looking at the views of love evidenced in Dante's own lyrics (e.g., 'Lo doloroso amor,' the 'rime petrose,' 'Io sono stato con Amore insieme,' 'Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia,' and 'Doglia mi reca ne lo core ardire'), the essay reconstructs the complex and arduous ideological pathway that Dante traversed to reach *Inferno* 5." [TB]

Boitani, Piero. "From the Shadow of Ulysses to the Shadow of the Argo: Dante's Dangerous Journeys." In *Speaking Images . . .* (q.v.), pp. 73–93.

Using the shadow as a metaphor with multiple meanings, Boitani revisits the Ulysses episode in order to look at Dante's treatment of myth more generally. The episode is dense with allusion, to Scripture and to various passages in the classical canon. Boitani considers why Dante makes use of such a multiplicity of referents and concludes that Ulysses represents "a very fundamental stumbling-block for Dante the man, for the whole of Western civilization . . . and for every human being." Through Ulysses, Dante is condemning both his own avid quest for knowledge and his culture's growing interest in exploration of various kinds. And in his desire to pursue "egocentric liberty," Boitani contends, Ulysses' story is the story of Everyman. As a figure with such resonance, Ulysses shadows Dante throughout the rest of the poem, until Dante can eventually transform Ulysses and go beyond him. Boitani calls this process "introjection, metamorphosis, and sublimation." The process picks up speed in the opening cantos of *Paradiso*, in which Dante transforms Ulysses' voyage into an "Argonautic enterprise" through what Boitani calls "transumption." The last mythological image in the poem—that of Neptune's wonder at the shadow of the Argo—is then "an extreme act of transumption." Boitani argues that for Dante "myth is the paradoxical authenticator of experiential reality." His verses treat "shadows as things of substance" and for this effort, Boitani concludes, we must thank him. [JLe]

Boldrini, Lucia. *Joyce, Dante, and the Poetics of Literary Relations: Language and Meaning in "Finnegan's Wake."* New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xi, 233 p.

Boldrini “examines how the literary and linguistic theories of Dante’s *Divine Comedy* helped shape the radical narrative techniques of Joyce’s last novel *Finnegan’s Wake*. Through detailed parallel readings, she explores a range of connections: issues such as the question of Babel, literary creation as excrement, the complex relations between literary, geometrical and female forms. Boldrini places Joyce’s work in the wider context of other modernist writing’s relation to Dante, thereby identifying the distinctness of Joyce’s own project. She considers how theories of influence and inter-textuality help or limit the understanding of the relation. Boldrini shows how, through an untiring confrontation with his predecessors, constantly thematised within his writing, Joyce develops a ‘poetics in progress’ that informs not only his final work but his entire oeuvre.” *Contents*: Acknowledgements (ix); List of abbreviations (x–xi); Introduction: In the Wake of the Divine Comic (1–14); Prelude: ‘Bethicket me’; or, Looking for the straight way in the wood of Samuel Beckett’s obliquity of exagmination (15–25); 1. Working in layers (26–64); 2. The confusioning of human races (65–98); 3. Distilling vulgar matter (99–139); 4. Figures of ineffability (140–189); Notes (190–214); Bibliography (215–225); Index (226–233).

Borges, Jorge Luis. “The Divine Comedy.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 118–135.

Botterill, Steven. “Ideals of the Institutional Church in Dante and Bernard of Clairvaux.” In *Italica* 78, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), 297–313.

Bernard of Clairvaux and Dante appear to share almost identical viewpoints in their ecclesiological thought. In this article, Botterill analyzes the many similarities demonstrated by the two authors, and wonders if, despite the chronological gap, it were possible to identify Bernard’s direct line of influence on the *Commedia*. By Dante’s time, Bernard’s widespread renown as a historical figure, and theological *auctoritas* had become common knowledge, thus making it almost impossible to discern a direct influence of Bernard’s thought in the *Commedia*. The presence in Paradise of Joachim of Fiore (*Par.* 12:140), a famed expert on Bernard’s works, particularly of the ecclesiological *De Consideratione*, testify to this fact. In addition, the author points out how the *Commedia* lacks a true literary ‘fingerprint’ of the abbot of Clairvaux, despite attempts to prove otherwise. Yet, in a comparative analysis of Dante’s and Bernard’s ideas on the institutional church, Botterill identifies in *Paradiso*, and particularly in

Cantos 12 and 22, a crucial notion shared by the author of the *Commedia*, and the famous reformer. These two cantos, in fact, exemplify a Christian Church profoundly human and individual, just as proposed by Bernard of Clairvaux, not only in *De Consideratione* but, especially, in sermon 46 of the *Song of Songs*. The holiness of each individual guarantees the holiness of the church; therefore, the reform of the church must pass through the “inner recovery” of the individual. The main message of Bernard of Clairvaux appears directly in the same ideological structure of Paradise, and embodied in the very journey of the epic character of the *Commedia*. [CF]

Bregni, Simone. “Paradise, the Delectable Garden: Intertextuality and Tradition in the *Divine Comedy*.” In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 62, No. 3 (September, 2001), 1043. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2001, 470 p.

“This thesis considers the relationship between the *Comedy* and the *topos* of Paradise in the light of modern theories of intertextuality. It presents a methodology for an *explication de texte* that pays detailed attention to the peculiarities of the medieval mind, its memory structures and the concept of allegory. [. . . T]hrough keywords, the author could invoke entire bodies of text that constituted a common cultural background for the typical reader in Dante’s times; these keywords are aimed at summoning up the whole tradition of Paradise in the Western tradition as depicted in fundamental texts ranging from Homer and Virgil, through the Apocalypse and the New Testament, and into medieval visionary writings. The thesis further argues that the more obscure the text in Dante (obscure, that is, from the perspective of the modern reader), the more frequent we may consider the presence of intertextual hypostases, and the more meaningful such passages within the entire economy of the poem.”

Camille, Michael. “The Pose of the Queer: Dante’s Gaze, Brunetto Latini’s Body.” In *Queering the Middle Ages*, edited by Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 57–86. (*Medieval Cultures* 27)

Focuses on the illustration of Dante and Virgil with Brunetto Latini in the lower margin of Musée Condé MS 1424 in Chantilly (fols. 113v and 114r) from 1327–28, which contains the Guido da Pisa commentary on the poem. Dante and Virgil stand amply clothed on the verso facing a stark naked Brunetto on the recto. Brunetto extends his right hand toward

the pair and holds his left arm akimbo on his hip. Dante's gaze is lowered and appears to meet Brunetto's naked body. Dante also extends a hand but the two do not touch: the possible point of contact is buried deep in the crevice of the manuscript binding, which dramatically separates the condemned sinners from the pilgrim and his guide. Behind Brunetto a troop of running sodomites is caught in snapshot, their naked bodies—arms, torsos, buttocks and legs—overlapping and intertwined. Camille aims to debunk the claims of the many revisionist readers of Canto 15 who have attempted to de-sexualize Brunetto (and by extension Dante) and argue that Dante used sodomy here in a broader sense to indicate a sin of language, or political or religious philosophy, or an exaggerated secular humanism. He provides a useful brief survey of the revisionists from Pézard to Armour and suggests that their readings are motivated by “fearful fantasies” of the sodomitic body, of Brunetto's body and its perilous proximity to Dante's own. He adduces the very physical, material evidence of the Chantilly manuscript and its early fourteenth-century illustrator, for whom the scene was clearly corporeal and sexual. Medieval readers were aware of the manuscript page as flesh. The manuscript book was sometimes parodied as a body entered from the rear and thus Camille suggests that the positioning of Dante and Brunetto here across the crack of the binding may not be casual. Regarding Brunetto's contrapposto pose with arm akimbo, Camille allows that in the fourteenth century there may have been “nothing necessarily effeminate about this particular stance,” rather it was intended ironically (in this infernal context) to encode Brunetto as elevated in class and culture and echo the frank nakedness of ancient statuary. The extended arm is a classical gesture of eloquence. Brunetto's self-conscious posing mocks him as pagan, overly attached to ancient refinements, and thus marks him just the same as “queer” (a term Camille accepts from the contemporary critical vocabulary to denote difference and to avoid the anachronistic modern identity “homosexual”). Camille extends his analyses to the troop of sodomites, whose hairless soft flesh, open mouths, and small penises bespeak queerness. He draws apt comparisons to other illuminations of the period that tend to erase the sodomitic body, thereby underscoring the Chantilly illustrator's bold, indeed flamboyant, rendering. [GPC]

Campbell, Mary Baine. “Wrath, Order, Paradise.” In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 383–394.

Casciani, Santa. "Reason, Deception, and Franciscan Spirituality in *Inferno* 26 and 27." In *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 22, No. 2 (2001), 37–55.

In this reading of the Ulysses episode in *Inferno* 26 and 27, Casciani examines the cultural background to Dante's work, noting that Gregory the Great had used the symbol of the ocean voyage as a metaphor for human disquiet and restlessness. During Dante's day, moreover, Franciscan intellectuals challenged the use of knowledge by the logicians from various universities, stressing that God had established limits to human reason. The Franciscans voiced the concern that the quest for intellectual speculation had the potential to lead people away from the true faith. Dante alludes to the position of the Franciscans through the symbol of the Straits of Gibraltar as a metaphor for the proper boundaries to human inquiry. Casciani performs a reading of Ulysses's monologue in order to determine the exact nature of his sin. She asserts that the phrase at the start of Ulysses' discourse—"nel mattino"—was a spatial and not a temporal referent. In other words, she suggests that the boat had already been turned back homeward; in short, Ulysses's *orazione picciola* was his response to a mutiny. She notes that Ulysses's speech is deliberately misleading, for he inspires his men to seek knowledge where there is no knowledge, in the hemisphere covered entirely by the ocean. Through Ulysses's speech, the poet illustrates the abuse of true logic and underscores that philosophical speculation can be justified only when supported by Christian doctrine. [FA]

Cassell, Anthony. "'Luna est Ecclesia': Dante and the 'Two Great Lights'." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 1–26.

Examines the use and origin of the decretalists' "two great lights" topos (supposedly based on Genesis 1:16) that Dante refutes in *Monarchia* 3:4. Noting that the poet allows the famous analogy to reenter the treatise at various points, he shows that the ending (*Mon.* 3:16) is quite consistent with the rest of the text and that the *Monarchia* was in fact far more conservative and conciliatory than critics and editors had previously considered. The canonist topos, used to great power and effect by Innocent III, Innocent IV, Boniface VIII and Clement V, and many other prelates, claimed that the temporal authority, as the moon, and the spiritual authority, as the sun, were merely two lights circling within the great firmament of the Church. The analogy diametrically opposed the theologians' traditional exegesis of the Church as the moon that had dominated Church writings

monolithically since Ambrose and Augustine. Cassell documents that this high-handed papalist reversal began in southern England soon after the murder of Thomas Becket for his defense of Church privileges and ten years before Innocent III first used it to assert papal might in papal documents of 1188. Cassell records Innocent's early friendship with the future Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephan Langton, and their eight-month pilgrimage to Becket's shrine while both the future pope and future archbishop were fellow students in Paris. [AC]

Chiampi, James T. "'Freighting Good Merchandise': Damnation as Maritime Barratry in *Inferno* XXI–XXIII." In *Rivista di Studi Italiani* 19, No. 2 (dicembre, 2001), 1–26.

Examines the repeated maritime metaphors in the discussions of barratry throughout the *Comedy* (e.g., *Paradiso* 11, but in particular *Inferno* 21–23). Such metaphors include the discussion of the Venetian Arsenal and the pitch in which the corrupt politicians are immersed. The author argues that the maritime language is not an innovation on the part of Dante, but is derived from a long tradition of writings on the vice of barratry. Classical sources discussed barratry through the metaphor of the corrupt sailor, who deliberately wrecks the ship and seizes the merchandise within the hold. Similarly, according to the analogy, the barrator damages the ship of state for personal gain. The classical metaphor is consonant with the Christian tradition, for authorities such as Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and Boethius reiterate it in their own writings. Dante, moreover, repeatedly employs the metaphor in his masterpiece, both in praising the upstanding political leaders in *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, and condemning the corrupt in *Inferno*. By analyzing Dante's various passages on the sin, the author demonstrates Dante's belief that the barrators have loved a means, money, rather than the end of that means, the highest Good. Therefore, those who succumbed to the sin have entrapped themselves by their choices. [FA]

Ciccarelli, Andrea. "Dante and Italian Culture from the Risorgimento to World War I." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 125–154.

Examines the correlation between the intellectual recovery of Dante's aesthetic world and the historical exploitation of the name of Dante as a national glory from the early Risorgimento to the rise of fascism. The goal is to demonstrate that the recovery of Dante by nineteenth-century Italian culture, except in very few cases, has scarcely to do with Dante's

aesthetic values; the conversion of Dante into an emblem of national unity was mostly tied to political and ethical reasons. In reading the works of the time, it is therefore necessary to differentiate between an instrumental view of Dante as the archetype of national consciousness, and the actual incorporation of Dante's aesthetic world by Italian writers. Focuses on three fundamental moments: 1) the rediscovery of Dante's moral example during the romantic period, and his consequent canonization as a Risorgimento icon; 2) the role of Francesco De Sanctis in shaping and transmitting an ethical, rather than a literary, image of Dante to modern Italy; and 3) the debates on or about Dante and Dantism which took place in Florence and Milan in the years prior to World War I. [AC]

Di Fonzo, Claudia. "La 'diffrazione per istituto' e la tradizione dell'Ottimo commento: opus practicum del commentatore (*Inferno* 28.6–12). Il caso di Gervasio Tilliberense." In the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America*: posted July 19, 2001, at www.dantesociety.org > Publications > Electronic Journal (EBDSA)

Di Pasquale, Theresa M. "Milton's Purgatorio." In *Philological Quarterly* 80, No. 2 (Spring, 2001), 169–186.

While Milton's conscious emulation of Virgil is evident both in the trajectory of his generic choices (from the pastoral of "Lycidas," for example, to the epic of *Paradise Lost*), and in the details of particular poetic scenes (as in the speaker's failed attempt to embrace his dead wife in the sonnet "Methought I saw my late espoused saint"), Dante's presence in Milton's poetic struggle proves instructive as well. Looking particularly at "Methought I saw my late espoused saint," DiPasquale argues that "the sonnet's intertextual relationship with *Paradise Lost* and with the works of Virgil and Dante suggests a purgative motion." The conclusion of the sonnet recalls Dante's encounter with Casella in *Purgatorio* 2: not only do details particular to the pilgrim's futile embrace of the singer find their way into Milton's sonnet, but Milton's poem bears traces of the language and concerns of both the *canzone* Casella sings in *Purgatorio*, "Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona," and the *canzone* that precedes it in the *Convivio*, "Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete." These two *canzoni* "provide a rich context for the dream-like experience of Milton's sonnet, helping to define what happens when the saint, 'Brought' to the poet by an unseen force, takes flight at his awakening and the return of a 'day' that '[brings]

back' his night." Dante's struggle to perceive the true meaning of Beatrice at the top of Purgatory then also speaks to Milton's labor to move past the lyric inspiration of his dream-state to the prophetic vision of Christ available to him only in the solitary night of his blindness. The Milton who understands that the vision of his dead wife must yield, "accepting even the loss of 'Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona,' is the poet who was ultimately able to write *Paradise Lost*." [JLe]

Di Piero, W. S. "Our Sweating Selves." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 344–353.

Doob, Penelope Reed. "Theseus T(h)reads the Maze: Labyrinthine Empowerment/Impairment and Ariadne's Absence." In *Speaking Images* . . . (q.v.), pp. 167–184 (+ 4 figures on unnumbered pages).

Considers the history of labyrinth stories, from Homer through the early Renaissance, noting the curious absence of women from the mazes themselves. While Ariadne helped Theseus negotiate the Cretan labyrinth, she herself does not enter it and winds up forsaken by Theseus. Doob regards the "irony whereby she whose knowledge of the labyrinth empowers other maze-walkers is herself impaired, diminished, abandoned." The abandonment of the Ariadne figure is intensified in the later Middle Ages, when the labyrinth is seen also to signify female genitalia, as in, for example, Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*; "[w]omen can't go into the labyrinth if they themselves *are* the maze." Doob identifies three exceptions to this tendency of female exclusion from the labyrinth in which women serve as guides through both literal and metaphorical labyrinthine structures: Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which the Sibyl guides Aeneas through the underworld; Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, in which Lady Philosophy conducts the prisoner out of his mental captivity; and Dante's *Comedy*, in which Beatrice, and guides sent by Beatrice, lead the pilgrim through the mazy afterworld. Ultimately, though, these female maze-walkers are not themselves empowered by their negotiation of the labyrinth, nor, as significantly asexual beings, are they sufficient role models for flesh and blood women. Doob concludes her essay, however, briefly touching on two late medieval texts that do in fact attempt to reclaim female mastery of the labyrinth: Chaucer's "Wife of Bath Tale" and, most emphatically, the anonymous *Assembly of Ladies*. [JLe]

Doty, Mark. "Rooting for the Damned." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 370–379.

Duncan, Robert. "The Sweetness and Greatness of Dante's *Divine Comedy*." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 186–209.

Dupont, Christian Y. "Collecting Dante in America at the End of the Nineteenth Century: John Zahm and Notre Dame." In *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 95, No. 4 (December, 2001), 443–481.

Provides a portrait of John Augustine Zahm, C.S.C. (1851–1921), who was responsible in large part for assembling the great Dante collection at the University of Notre Dame. The essay examines his "motivations for and methods of collecting Dante" and presents in great detail the growth of the Notre Dame collection, especially the acquisition of much of Giulio Acquaticci's collection.

Eliot, T. S. "What Dante Means to Me." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 28–39.

Ferrucci, Franco. "Plenilunio sulla selva: il *Convivio*, le petrose, la *Commedia*." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 67–102.

Proposes that the date of Dante's *rime petrose* should be assigned to the years 1307–1308, when the poet was often visiting the Guidi family at Poppi and Pratovecchio in the Casentino, and offers evidence for this claim. Ferrucci establishes a number of references between the *Comedy* and the *petrose*, and maintains that Dante's writing of the fourth "trattato" of *Convivio* was contemporary to his passion for the "donna Petra." He reassigns the *canzone montanina* to the cycle of the *petrose* and gives great significance to the fourth epistle, addressed to Moroello Malaspina and accompanying the same *canzone*, in which the first vision of the woman is described in vivid terms. Ferrucci suggests that the *pargoletta* is none other than "donna Petra" and elaborates on the allegorical presence of the full moon in the opening canto of *Inferno* that is not declared until later in the poem, when it is mentioned twice and with manifest intent (*Inf.* 20:127–129; *Purg.* 23:118–121). Ferrucci proposes that the moon is a symbolic icon of "donna Petra" and that the lunar *inclinatio* governs the whole inspiration of this series of poems. Moreover, he reconsiders the date of the *canzone* "Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute" (and proposes 1309), seeing it as Dante's farewell to the love story with "donna Petra." [FF]

Fitzgerald, Robert. "Mirroring the *Commedia*: An Appreciation of Laurence Binyon's Version." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 144–170.

Fleming, John V. "The Pentecosts of Four Poets." In *Speaking Images* . . . (q.v.), pp. 111–141.

Considers the ending of Chaucer's "Summoner's Tale" from the perspective of literary iconography. Fleming first articulates an understanding, widely accepted in Chaucer studies, of the scene, in which a squire figures out how to divide a fart into twelve equal parts with the aid of a cartwheel: the entertaining passage "involves a burlesque allusion to the pictorial or mimetic presentations of the Pentecost." He then analyzes various aspects of the Pentecost theme as it appears in the work of three other medieval poets: Wolfram von Eschenbach, Dante, and Luís de Camões. All three allude to the Pentecost without naming it, and all three seem to make use of both verbal and visual accounts of it. In the fifteenth book of *Parzival* Wolfram describes a moment of sacred proclamation, and in the sixteenth book he refers to a baptism that recalls Peter's Pentecostal exhortation to baptism. Dante's description of the simoniacs, planted upside down with their feet aflame in the Malebolge, takes up and perverts the iconographic vocabulary of Pentecost: the emblematic flames that touch the heads of the Apostles in Acts and in visual exegeses of the story now lick the feet of the pseudo-apostles, the corrupt popes of the third bolgia. Camões more literally engages the pictorial in his reference to the Pentecost. In a passage in the *Lusiads* in which Bacchus feigns Christian devotion, Camões describes an altar painted with an image of the Pentecost: the twelve apostles, joined by Mary and a dove, gaze at each other, amazed at the sight of the tongues of fire. Fleming links each of these scenes to "The Summoner's Tale," but makes clear that "with Chaucer we are seldom dealing with the exclusive alternatives of an *either* and an *or*." Chaucer's sources, then, for the scatological conclusion to "The Summoner's Tale" seem to range from the liturgical, to the scriptural, to the literary, to the pictorial. Fleming concludes, "[w]hat we find in Chaucer's 'Summoner's Tale' is an iconographic style that elides verbal and pictorial 'sources,' that combines a respectful use of tradition with a playful and expressive inventiveness." [JLe]

Gaudenzi, Cosetta. "Appropriations of Dante: XVIII and early XIX Century Translations of the *Divine Comedy* in Great Britain." In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 61, No. 8 (February, 2001), 3159. Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 2000, 230 p.

"My dissertation crosses disciplinary lines which have traditionally sep-

arated Italian literature, English literature, and socio-cultural history. I disclose some of the general factors which made and continue to make Dante's *Commedia* so attractive to British readers. I examine the partial and complete versions of the *Divine Comedy* from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the first substantial renditions of Dante's poem into English, and I concentrate on *Inferno* I-III, V, XXVI, and XXXIII. . . . As I discuss the translations chronologically, I trace the processes which eventually led to the first authoritative translation of Dante's entire *Commedia* by Henry Cary (1814) and to the British Romantic construction of Dante as an author."

Gilson, Simon A. "Medieval Magical Lore and Dante's *Commedia*: Divination and Demonic Agency." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 27-66.

Attempts to demonstrate that a variety of phenomena which medieval writers associated with the magical arts occupies a more extensive place in Dante's *Commedia* than many earlier critics and commentators have assumed. It is argued that Dante was influenced by a range of different sources and cultural traditions, and that in his poem he draws not only upon official condemnations of the magical arts but also upon the often unsanctioned realm of popular legend and belief. The essay also surveys the theological, philosophical, and scientific and other traditions that provide the essential context for several areas of magical lore which are found in the *Commedia*. It then uses this contextual material in order to explore Dante's treatment of divination in *Inferno* 20, his earlier use of a necromantic episode in *Inferno* 9:22-27, and two passages that deal with the powers of demons to occupy human bodies and to interfere in the natural order in *Inferno* 33:122-135 and *Purgatorio* 5:109-129, respectively. [SAG]

Halpern, Daniel. "Dante in Perpignan." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 354-358.

Hawkins, Peter S. (Joint editor). See *The Poets' Dante*. . . .

Hawkins, Peter S., and Rachel Jacoff. "Still Here: Dante after Modernism." In *The Yale Review* 89, No. 3 (July, 2001), 11-24.

Review of some of the most significant adaptations and reworkings of Dante that looks "back at the various unexpected roles Dante has played in twentieth-century poetry." The works considered are: Eliot's "Little Gidding" (inspired by *Inf.* 15 and *Purg.* 26); Derek Walcott's *Epitaph for the Young* (a parody of "Little Gidding") and *Omeros*; Seamus Heaney's

Field Work (which contains a translation of the Ugolino episode), *Station Island* and *Seeing Things*; Charles Wright's *The World of Ten Thousand Things*; and Gjertrud Schnackenberg's "A Gilded Lapse of Time." [MP]

Heaney, Seamus. "Envies and Identifications: Dante and the Modern Poet." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 239–258.

Hill, Geoffrey. "Between Politics and Eternity." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 319–332.

Hirsch, Edward. "Summoning Shades." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 395–403.

Hollander, Robert. "'La concubina di Titone antico': *Purgatorio* 9.1." In the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America*: posted July 31, 2001, at www.dantesociety.org > Publications > Electronic Journal (EBDSA).

Hollander, Robert. *Dante. A Life in Works*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001. xiv, 222 p.

"Through an exposition of Dante's . . . writings, Robert Hollander provides a concise intellectual biography of the writer. . . . Beginning with the *Vita nuova* and proceeding chronologically through Dante's writings, Hollander delineates the major strands of the poet's thought. He presents the works themselves, discusses their critical reception through the centuries, and addresses issues raised by each text. Hollander, writing for those who have already encountered the *Commedia*, suggests to these readers how Dante's other works relate to the great poem and invites them to reread the *Commedia* with new interest and understanding." *Contents*: Preface (ix-x); Chronology of Dante's Life (xi-xiv); Introduction (1-2); Dante's Life (2-7); First Lyrics (7-12); *Vita nuova* (12-40); Later Lyrics (40-45); *Convivio* I (45-54); *De vulgari Eloquentia* (54-74); *Convivio* II and III (74-81); *Convivio* IV (81-90); *Commedia* (90-94); Truth and Poetry (94-96); Allegory (97-104); The Moral Situation of the Reader (104-109); The Moral Order of the Afterworld (109-114); Virgil (114-121); Beatrice (121-127); Bernard (127-129); Politics (129-144); The Poetry of the *Comedy* (144-148); *Monarchia* (148-167); Late Latin Works (167-180); Notes (181-209); Bibliographical Note (211-212); Index (213-222).

Hollander, Robert. "*Inferno* XV.29: 'chinando la mia alla sua faccia.'" In the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America*: posted August 20,

2001, at www.dantesociety.org > Publications > Electronic Journal (EBDSA).

Holmes, Olivia. "Dante's Two Beloveds: Ethics as Erotic Choice." In *Annali d'Italianistica* 19 (2001), 25–50.

The author of this article takes as a starting point the medieval theory that the purpose of literature was to influence ethical decisions: texts should either praise the worthy or castigate the sinful, thereby inducing readers to reject sin and to follow virtue in their own lives. The Letter to Cangrande explicitly inscribes *Paradiso* in the dichotomy of praise and blame, thus positioning the *Commedia* within the framework of morality; while the epistle is possibly apocryphal, readership does not need to rely upon it to locate the duality of praise/blame in Dante's masterpiece. Dante structures much of the *Commedia* around the diametrical opposition of *laus* and *vituperium* by demonstrating the consequences of free will. Indeed, many of the parallels within the work indicate the different possibilities, depending upon the choices of the individuals (e.g., Buonconte and Guido da Montefeltro). Throughout much of his literature, the poet frequently presents himself facing two options, which allegorizes a moral decision. Yet it would be mistaken to interpret Dante's symbolism as univocal allegory, where images only connote abstract ideas in a one-to-one relationship. Toward the end of the narrative of the *Vita Nuova*, for example, Dante becomes distracted from the memory of Beatrice by the presence of the *donna gentile*. In the *Convivio*, the poet explicates the latter as the personification of Philosophy and not as a flesh-and-blood woman. The selection, therefore, between the *donna gentile* and Beatrice does not necessarily indicate the choice between good and evil, the author stresses, but a more nuanced moral distinction between good and better. [FA]

Howard, Lloyd. *Formulas of Repetition in Dante's "Commedia": Signposted Journeys across Textual Space*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.

Examines "recurrent linguistic patterns or 'formulas' scattered across the textual space of Dante's *Commedia*. . . . Formulas are usually understood as rhetorical devices that are found in close textual proximity and, because they are intended for emphasis, cannot possibly escape the notice of the reader. The formulas . . . trace[d] in this study are far more difficult to find because they are hidden deep in the structure of the *Commedia* and

at considerable distances from one another.” *Contents*: Acknowledgments (vii); Abbreviations (ix-x); Note on Text and Translations (xi); Introduction (3-22); 1. Linguistic Configuration as a Clue to the Impossible Made Possible: *Inferno* 1, *Purgatorio* 11, and *Purgatorio* 12 (23-28); 2. The Descent into “l’infernale ambascia”: The Journey and Adam’s Flesh (29-40); 3. Decoding the Parallelism of Three Descents into Dante’s Hell (41-50); 4. Dante’s Wasted Years: What Is He Thinking in *Inferno* 5 and *Purgatorio* 31? (51-65); 5. Linguistic Patterns and Internal Structure in Five Cantos in the *Inferno*: From Political *degni* to Political Sinners (66-92); 6. Dante’s Fear of the Fire: Unperceived Links between *Inferno* 15-16 and *Purgatorio* 26-27 (93-104); 7. Florentine Politicians as Fallible Archers: *Purgatorio* 6 and *Purgatorio* 31 (105-115); 8. Virgil and Caiaphas “ne l’eterno essilio” (116-130); 9. The Destination: Dante’s Eyes Fixed and Attentive (131-153); Notes (155-193); Bibliography (195-200); Index (201-205).

Jacoff, Rachel. “The Hermeneutics of Hunger.” In *Speaking Images . . .* (*q.v.*), pp. 95-110.

Ugolino’s narrative in *Inferno* 33 is among the most controversial in the *Comedy* and has engendered a range of artistic and critical responses. Jacoff’s essay recontextualizes the episode within the poem itself and within the discourses that might affect its implications, paying particular attention to Ugolino’s vexing final line “Poscia, più che ’l dolor, poté ’l digiuno” (*Inf.* 33.75). She offers evidence, drawn both from the poem and from literary and iconographic sources likely known to Dante, to support a reading of Ugolino’s cannibalism. For example, Dante demonstrates no sympathy toward any of the sinners in Cocytus; he criticizes Pisa for imprisoning Ugolino’s children, but not for imprisoning Ugolino; Ugolino’s eternal pose, gnawing on Archbishop Ruggieri’s head, makes it difficult not to think about his possible cannibalism and arguably fixes him forever in an illustration of a particular identity. Moreover, since a tradition of a cannibalistic Satan is strongly supported in artistic images known to, or contemporary with Dante, in his punishment of Ugolino, Dante grants Ugolino an iconographic role normally given to demons of some kind. Finally, Jacoff considers the sources for readers’ and critics’ discomfort with the centrality of cannibalism to the narrative. She looks at the anxiety surrounding cannibalism in patristic discussions of the resurrection of the body and takes into account disturbing associations with the Eucharist that might result in a troubling confrontation with “what is intolerable.” [JLe]

Jacoff, Rachel. (Joint author). See **Hawkins, Peter S.** "Still Here. . . ."

Jacoff, Rachel. (Joint editor). See *The Poets' Dante*. . . .

Kanekar, Aarati. "The Geometry of Love and the Topography of Fear: On Translation and Metamorphosis from Poem to Building." In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 61, No. 7 (January, 2001), 2491. Doctoral dissertation, Georgia Institute of Technology, 2000, 304 p.

"Translations across different symbolic media necessarily involve reconstruction and transformation arising from the manner in which meaning is constituted in each medium. Terragni's design for a monument to Dante, based on *The Divine Comedy*, raises questions of translatability between literature and architecture that are seldom explored in design or theory. In this thesis, the Danteum is taken as a point of departure in order to illuminate *The Divine Comedy* as an intersection of linguistic, visual and architectural media. It is suggested that while the project is an attempt to present a poem as a building, the poem itself absorbs into linguistic form cosmological and architectural ideas that were first realized in built form."

Kerr, John M. "Proserpinan Memory in Dante and Chaucer." In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 62, No. 1 (July, 2001), 163. Doctoral dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2001, 362 p.

"This study examines Dante's and Chaucer's elaboration upon the classical and medieval conceptions of the tripartite Proserpina (Proserpina in hell, Diana on earth, and Luna—the moon—in heaven). Each chapter points to various seasonal motifs, but focuses on the vertical chthonic element of the myth, which in medieval commentary situates Proserpina as a goddess of memory. Dante and Chaucer each figure memory as an underworld, with Proserpina reigning over this memorial space. Poetically 'descending' to this underworld, Dante and Chaucer encounter the (primarily textual) culture of the past, re-ascending with their own present writing, firmly rooted in, but always changing that which came before. In the *Commedia*, Dante employs a host of infernal, agricultural, hunting, and lunar motifs from the goddess's three aspects, incorporating Proserpina into an Augustinian matrix of *memory*, *intellect*, and *will*. In the infernal encounter with Proserpina's servants (the furies), Dante and the reader must get beyond the level of mere memory and by using the intellect. *Purgatorio's* encounter with Proserpinan / Dianan Matelda refines Dante's memory, and instructs him in the limits of intellect. In *Paradiso*, Dante

meets Piccarda, whose Christian re-playing of the Proserpina myth à la Claudian challenges Dante's understanding of the will."

Kuusisto, Pekka Johannes. "From the Center to the Circumference: Encyclopedic Topologies in Literature from Dante through Modern Science Fiction." In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 62, No. 2 (August, 2001), 562. Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2001 577 p.

"This dissertation studies the notion of *encyclopedic topologies* in such examples where *literature and science* meet and interact as Plato's *Timaeus*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* and *The Anxiety of the Head of Family* and other stories of Franz Kafka as situated within Tzvetan Todorov's structuralist theory of the literary fantastic, and finally in the *many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics* and its application in Gregory Benford's *Timescape* and elsewhere in modern *science fiction*. . . . I propose a view where literature is understood as historically situated within the encyclopedia, that is, a reading of the literary text as an embedded version—an *encyclopedic macrocosm* of Dante or Joyce—or as a reflective image—an *encyclopedic microcosm* of Kafka or James—of an encyclopedia within the encyclopedia. . . . In my dissertation, Dante's *Comedy* develops the function of the *tree-ordered* center of the *Ptolemaic mentality* of Western encyclopedism. . . ."

Lewis, R. W. B. *Dante*. New York: Penguin Putnam, 2001. xi, 205 p. (Penguin Lives Series)

Lewis "traces the life and complex development—emotional, artistic, philosophical—of this supreme poet-historian, from his wandering through the Tuscan hills and splendid churches to his days as a young soldier fighting for democracy, and to his civic leadership and years of embittered exile from the city that would fiercely reclaim him a century later. Lewis reveals the boy who first encounters the mythic Beatrice, the lyric poet obsessed with love and death, and the grand master of dramatic narrative and allegory, as well as his monumental search for ultimate truth in *The Divine Comedy*. It is in this masterpiece of self-discovery and redemption that Lewis finds Dante's autobiography—and the sum of all his shifting passions and epiphanies." *Contents*: Special Sources (ix-x); 1. Dante the Florentine (1–15); 2. Neighborhood Presences: The Early Years (16–27); 3. Love, Poetry, and War: The 1280s (28–44); 4. The Death of Beatrice and a New Life: 1288–1295 (45–61); 5. The Way of

Politics: 1295–1302 (62–84); 6. The Poet in Exile, 1302–1310: The *Comedy* Is Begun (85–123); 7. The Middle of the Journey: 1310–1319 (124–160); 8. Ravenna, 1318–1321: The *Comedy* Is Finished (161–197); Bibliographical Notes (199–202); Additional Acknowledgments (203–205).

Lewis, R. W. B. “Dante the Florentine.” In *The Yale Review* 89, No. 3 (July, 2001), 1–10.

Brief introductory survey of some major considerations regarding Dante, including the Guelph-Ghibelline conflict, Florentine guilds, demographics and civic architecture, the Black-White split and Dante’s exile, the *Commedia*’s popularity and Ravenna as the poet’s burial place. [MP]

Lindon, John. “In Memoriam: Marcella Roddewig (1918–2000).” In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 213–216.

Necrology of the late distinguished Dante scholar.

Lowell, Robert. “Dante’s Actuality and Fecundity in the Anglo-Saxon World.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 171–175.

Lowell, Robert. “Epics.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 176–185.

Mandelstam, Osip. “Conversation about Dante.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 40–93.

Mazzaro, Jerome. “*Paradiso* XX, the Missing Virgin, and Absent Presence.” In *Forum Italicum* 35, No. 1 (Spring, 2001), 5–22.

In the heaven of justice, David and Trajan are named as the pupil and the beginning of the curve of the eyebrow of the eagle. Readers of the poem “feel an initial absence” at the identification of these characters, as the moment recalls *Purgatorio* 10, where they were juxtaposed with the Virgin Mary as examples of humility. The Virgin was frequently associated with justice in the Middle Ages, and—finding it impossible to portray her merely in the sixth heaven, Dante portrays her “covertly” in *Paradiso* 20 through her association with the other two figures. The reader remembers the association of the three characters and so supplies the third when the other two are presented. Similarly, in his allusion to the voyage of the Argo in *Paradiso* 33, Dante enables the reader to recall Christian, salvation history through an act of remembrance that compensates for the absence of Dante’s explicit mention of that history. Indeed, this strategy

can be seen to characterize the entire poem, in which “the entire *Commedia* [is] an effort to make presence an absence, the absence being the original experience being recalled” (18). [VSB]

McClatchy, J. D. “His Enamel.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 277–291.

Merrill, James. “Divine Poem.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 227–235.

Merwin, W. S. “Poetry Rising from the Dead.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 292–305.

Modesto, Diana. “Dante all’altro polo: Dante Studies in Australasia.” In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 203–211.

An overview of critical studies and related activities on Dante in Australia.

Montale, Eugenio. “Dante, Yesterday and Today.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 94–117.

Morrison, Molly. “Looking at God: Imagery for the Divinity in Dante’s *Paradiso*.” In *Forum Italicum* 35, No. 2 (Fall, 2001), 307–317.

There are two moments in the *Paradiso* in which the poet attempts to describe his vision of God: Canto 28 (where he describes God as an infinitely small, infinitely brilliant point) and Canto 33 (where “the tiny bright *point* now becomes a larger *light*, a light which somehow divides itself into three,” 313). Our understanding of these two visions is increased by reading them within the context of the theology of Pseudo-Dionysius. Dante’s “point” affirms Dionysian theory of religious symbols in that it both “denies the Divine Essence, yet affirms it” (309). This vision prepares the pilgrim for his more profound vision in the poem’s final canto, in which he penetrates the vision of God while simultaneously coming to the Dionysian realization that God is ultimately beyond all human understanding. [VSB]

Nemerov, Howard. “The Dream of Dante.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 210–226.

Osherow, Jacqueline. “She’s Come Undone: An American Jew Looks at Dante.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 265–276.

Parker, Deborah. “Dante ‘Giocoso’: Bronzino’s Burlesque of the *Commedia*.” In *Quaderni d’italianistica* 22, No. 1 (2001), 77–101.

The author aims to point out “indecent adaptations” of the *Comedy* in the burlesque poetry of Agnolo Bronzino “in order to draw attention to the painter’s poetry” and “to clarify its relation to an earlier tradition of parodies of Dante.” The article opens with a short catalogue of allusions to the *Comedy* in Della Casa’s *Galateo*, Pulci’s *Morgante* and Lorenzo de’ Medici’s *Simposio*. After a short overview of Bronzino’s interest in Dante and Petrarch, the author identifies several humorous reworkings of Dante in the *Capitoli*, especially “La cipolla” and “Il piatto.” [MP]

Peters, Edward. *Limits of Thought and Power in Medieval Europe*. Aldershot and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2001. xiv, 344 p. (Variorum Collected Studies Series)

Contains seven essays on Dante, all reprinted verbatim from their original source. They are, in the order found in the volume: “The Failure of Church and Empire: *Paradiso*, 30,” in *Medieval Studies* 34 (1972), 326–335 [see *Dante Studies* 91 (1973), 175]; “I principi negligenti di Dante e le concezioni medioevali del *rex inutilis*,” in *Rivista Storica Italiana* 80 (1968), 741–758; “*Pars, Parte*: Dante and an Urban Contribution to Political Thought,” in *The Medieval City*, edited by Harry A. Miskimin, David Herlihy, and A. L. Udovitch (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 113–140 [see *Dante Studies* 99 (1981), 206]; “The Frowning Pages: Scythians, Garamantes, Florentines, and the Two Laws,” in *The Divine Comedy and the Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences*, edited by Giuseppe C. Di Scipio and Aldo Scaglione (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1988), pp. 285–314 [see *Dante Studies* 107 (1989), 153]; “Human Diversity and Civil Society in *Paradiso* VIII,” in *Dante Studies* 109 (1991), 51–70 [see *Dante Studies* 110 (1992), 303]; “The Shadowy, Violent Perimeter: Dante Enters Florentine Political Life,” in *Dante Studies* 113 (1995), 69–87 [see *Dante Studies* 114 (1996), 331–332]; and “The Voyage of Ulysses and the Wisdom of Solomon: Dante and the *vitium curiositatis*,” in *Majestas* 7 (1999), 75–87.

Pinsky, Robert. “The Pageant of Unbeing.” In *The Poets’ Dante* (q.v.), pp. 306–318.

The Poets’ Dante. Edited by Peter S. Hawkins and Rachel Jacoff. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001. xxvi, 406 p.

Contains original and reprinted essays (or portions thereof), in which poets discuss their personal engagement with Dante: “how they first encountered him, what drew them in, what kept them at a distance, whether his writing had any direct influence on their own.” In their

Introduction (xiii-xxvi) Jacoff and Hawkins survey the reception of Dante in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and speak in both general and specific terms of the twenty-eight essays contained in the volume. Authors of the essays (in alphabetical order) are W. H. Auden, Jorge Luis Borges, Mary Baine Campbell, W. S. Di Piero, Mark Doty, Robert Duncan, T. S. Eliot, Robert Fitzgerald, Daniel Halpern, Seamus Heaney, Geoffrey Hill, Edward Hirsch, Robert Lowell, Osip Mandelstam, J. D. McClatchy, James Merrill, W. S. Merwin, Eugenio Montale, Howard Nemerov, Jacqueline Osherow, Robert Pinsky, Ezra Pound, Rosanna Warren, C. K. Williams, Charles Williams, Alan Williamson, Charles Wright, and William Butler Yeats. Each essay is listed separately in this bibliography under the individual author's name. Given their nature, these essays are not accompanied by an abstract.

Pound, Ezra. "From *Dante*." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 3-11.

Roglieri, Maria Ann. *Dante and Music: Musical Adaptations of the "Commedia" from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*. Burlington, Vermont, and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. xii, 317 p.

"Ever since its compilation in the fourteenth century, Dante's great epic poem, the *Commedia*, has been adapted in a wide variety of musical forms by composers across the world. Drawing on primary research in scores and recordings, and on interviews with contemporary composers, Maria Roglieri provides . . . an overview of these adaptations, considering them in light of Dante's verses and his own use of music in the *Commedia*. Three categories of adaptation are examined: adaptations of the entire poem, works that focus on a particular character, and pieces that adapt an individual passage from the poem. Roglieri offers some possible motivations for each composer's choice of a particular passage of character, and examines the ways in which these choices influence the musical form of the adaptation. Common characteristics between works are also identified." Important for its examination of the relationship between music in Dante and Dante in music, Roglieri's book "provides Dantists and musicologists alike with essential information on musical adaptations of Dante's poem as well as an analytical framework for considering this material. In addition, it demonstrates that works like the *Commedia* offer a unique opportunity to chart differing musical styles over the course of centuries." *Contents*: List of Figures (vii-ix); List of Tables in Appendix (x); Acknowledgements (xi-xii); 1. Introduction (1-17); 2. The Music of

Dante's Hell, Purgatory and Paradise (18–73); 3. Francesca da Rimini: Romantic and Modern Heroine in Music (74–108); 4. Dramatic Musical Tales of Dantean Characters (109–154); 5. The Antimusic of Hell: Screams and Lamentations (155–195); 6. *Purgatorio*: Songs of a New Dawn (196–233); 7. Heavenly Love Songs and *La dolce sinfonia di Paradiso* (234–265); 8. Some Concluding Remarks on Dante and Music (266–278); Appendix: Tables Representing the Compiled Data on Musical Settings of the *Commedia*: Table 1: Musical settings of the *Commedia* arranged by year of composition (279–290), Table 2: Musical settings of the entire *Commedia* arranged by year of composition (291), Table 3: Musical settings of particular characters from the *Commedia* by character and year of composition (292–297), Table 4: Musical settings of passages from *Inferno* arranged by canto and year of composition (298–299), Table 5: Musical settings of passages from the *Purgatorio* arranged by canto and year of composition (300), Table 6: Musical settings of passages from *Paradiso* arranged by canto and year of composition (301), Table 7: Recordings of musical settings of the *Commedia* (302–304); Bibliography (305–314); Index (315–317).

Rotundo, Angela Rita. “A Teacher’s Soulful Inquiry: Exploring Professional Development Using *The Divine Comedy* as a Guide.” In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 62, No. 4 (October, 2001), 1380. Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, 2001, 282 p.

“This is a reflexive inquiry about a teacher’s story as she journeys through life and her professional teaching experiences. Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy* is used to recreate a metaphorical journey towards self-understanding partly influenced by the interactions of people she meets along life’s path.”

Salwa, Piotr. “Dante in Polonia: una presenza viva?” In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 187–202.

A rapid overview of Dante’s tradition and “fortune” in contemporary Poland. More than a bibliographical review of studies and translations, the essay focuses on how Dante’s work and Dante’s myth have been adopted and shaped to suit ideological trends of Polish culture. The Poet—whose name has been associated almost exclusively with the *Divina Commedia* and the *Vita Nuova*—has become a symbol of the patriot, Christian, exile, and ideal lover. He is constantly present in contemporary Polish culture—even more outside than inside the academic community—as an obligatory

reference to the European tradition, while provoking very personal, unconventional, and controversial reactions from major Polish authors. [PS]

Sayers, William. "Dante's Venetian Shipyard Scene (*Inf.* 21), Barratry, and Maritime Law." In *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 22, No. 2 (2001), 57–79.

The article begins by posing a question: in the beginning of *Inferno* 21, why does Dante provide the vast description of the shipyard of the Venetian *arzanà* when he merely alludes to the boiling pitch of the fifth *bolgia*? The scholar attempts to demonstrate that while the *Comedy* is replete with nautical metaphors, the cantos of the barrators also possess numerous references to seafaring. The referents include both terminology derived from sailing as well as lexical items that phonologically suggest such terms. In other words, the opening metaphor of the Venetian *arzanà* is merely part of a larger program on the part of the poet to associate barratry with ocean voyages. Medieval maritime law, which defined barratry as the deliberate sinking of a ship and confiscation of its cargo, helps to explain the *raison d'être* for Dante's extended metaphor. In the culture of the Middle Ages, barratry and seafaring were conceptually linked, and Dante utilizes that connection for literary purposes. [FA]

Schildgen, Brenda Deen. "Dante's Utopian Political Vision, the Roman Empire, and the Salvation of Pagans." In *Annali d'Italianistica* 19 (2001), 51–69.

Argues that Dante's utopian politics impelled him to place the Latin poets—Virgil, Ovid, Lucan and Horace—in Limbo. They could not be saved because they were unable to "see the Empire as the instrument of providential history." The essay looks at the ethical criteria Dante uses in considering pagan salvation, concluding that those poets who question the Empire's aims are punished in the *Commedia* for their misgivings. By contrast, the saved pagans—Statius, Cato, Trajan, and Ripheus—demonstrate a commitment to hope, love, and Roman values and share an optimistic view of history which places the foundation of Rome as a key moment in salvation history. Dante "singled out other Romans for salvation whom he made co-partners in his own vision. Dante's utopian political vision put faith in a history guided by divine providence, whereas in reading his great literary forebears, he recognized that they did not share this hope." [JLe]

Shoaf, R. Allen. *Chaucer's Body: The Anxiety of Circulation in the "Canterbury Tales."* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001. xvi, 162 p.

Among the several references to Dante's works one in particular focuses at some length on the possible relationship between Canto 33 of the *Inferno* (Alberigo dei Manfredi) and Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale* (40–45).

Speaking Images: Essays in Honor of V. A. Kolve. Edited by Robert F. Yeager and Charlotte C. Morse. Asheville, North Carolina: Pegasus Press, The University of North Carolina at Asheville, 2001. xvii, 650 p.

This *Festschrift* to honor V. A. Kolve contains several essays dealing in some way or another with Dante. These essays—by Piero Boitani, Rachel Jacoff, John V. Fleming, and Penelope Reed Doob—are listed separately in this bibliography under the individual author's name.

Storey, H. Wayne, and Christopher Kleinhenz. "American Dante Bibliography for 2000." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 217–273.

With brief analyses.

Taccheri, Umberto. "I sogni boeziani del *Purgatorio* dantesco." In *Dissertation Abstracts International* 61, No. 10 (April, 2001), 4020. Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2000, 251.

"In queste pagine presenteremo una nuova ipotesi sull'influenza della *Consolatio Philosophiae* di Anicio Manlio Severino Boezio sulla *Divina Commedia* di Dante Alighieri. Noi proporremo una lettura dei tre sogni di *Purgatorio* 9, 19 e 27 in chiave di una rielaborazione di tre poesie della *Consolatio Philosophiae* di Boezio: la dodicesima poesia del terzo libro su Orfeo ed Euridice, la terza poesia del quarto libro, su Ulisse e Circe, e l'ultima poesia del quarto libro, su Agamennone, Ulisse ed Ercole, tre episodi che nel testo boeziano illustrano allegoricamente l'ascesa spirituale del protagonista verso il sommo bene. Mediante un parallelo tra i sogni del *Purgatorio* ed alcuni passaggi che li circondano con questi brani della *Consolatio* ed alcuni dei commentari ad essa dedicati che godettero di larga diffusione nel medio evo, illustreremo che la seconda cantica della *Commedia* prende a modello il percorso spirituale rappresentato allegoricamente nella successione dei tre *metra* mitologici di Boezio per allontanarsi gradualmente e sistematicamente da essi."

Ullén, Magnus. "Dante in Paradise: The End of Allegorical Interpretation." In *New Literary History* 32, No. 1 (2001), 177–199.

The anagogical meaning of any narrative is that determined by the reader in applying at the moral level a chosen ideological matrix to a literal narrative discourse, with the allegorical level seen as a *mise en abyme* of the

act of reading itself. In the *Divine Comedy*, symbol and allegory merge because the origin and end of the narrative are ultimately the same: God.

Usher, Jonathan. "A Narnian Ulysses." In the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America*: posted March 12, 2001, at www.dantesociety.org > Publications > Electronic Journal (EBDSA).

Van Anglen, K. P. "Before Longfellow: Dante and the Polarization of New England." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 155–186.

Through a survey of Dante's reception in the three main literary periodicals of early nineteenth-century New England (the *Monthly Anthology*, the *North American Review*, and the *Christian Examiner*), Van Anglen reveals a previously neglected or in some cases overlooked body of Dante criticism that arose in the decades before Longfellow arrived at Harvard in 1836. He interprets it as reflecting the literary politics of Unitarian Boston, particularly the conflicted response of the city's elite to democracy and to Roman Catholicism. The former manifested itself in Unitarian criticism's use of Dante and his writings to illustrate "the translation of empire" theme, which warned that America might suffer the fate of Italy should it reject the consensualist leadership claims of educated professionals and men of letters. The latter bespoke the widespread attraction and repulsion of upper-class Yankee artists and writers toward Catholicism and Mediterranean culture in the antebellum period. Both, the author concludes, suggest that more work needs to be done on the regional cultural context out of which Longfellow and his contemporaries emerged as Dantists. [KPVA]

Warren, Rosanna. "Words and Blood." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 333–343.

Watt, Mary Alexandra Watt. "Take This Bread: Dante's Eucharistic Banquet." In *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 22, No. 2 (2001), 17–35.

Examines Dante's evocation and revision of his own literary past as found in the *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio*. In the opening lines of the *libello*, where Dante speaks of transcribing the book of memory, the poet casts himself as a writer, copyist, and redactor of the lyric poetry therein. He establishes, in short, a tension in the *tunc et nunc* (then and now) structure typical to many conversion narratives; he is both the person who underwent the experiences communicated in the lyrics, as well as the amanuensis transcribing and commenting on the poetry. The simultaneous

adoption and revision of his own verse constitutes Dante's attempt both to break with the past and, at the same time, to reconcile it with the present. Dante utilizes numerous Pauline allusions in the *Vita Nuova* in part to underscore the temporal aspects of the *tunc et nunc* structure. Beatrice's *post mortem* appearances to Dante recollect Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, and anticipate the Pauline elements that are a crucial component of the *Commedia*. Dante, moreover, strikes a similar pose of evocation and correction of the past in the *Convivio*, where the image of the banquet is a metaphor for the *tunc et nunc* dichotomy. Dante situates himself therein as the exegete of his own verse in order to control the reception of his poetry. [FA]

Williams, C. K. "Souls." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 380–382.

Williams, Charles. "From *The Figure of Beatrice*." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 16–27.

Williamson, Alan. "The Tears of Cocytus." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 359–369.

Wilson-Okamura, David Scott. "Lavinia and Beatrice: The Second Half of the *Aeneid* in the Middle Ages." In *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 103–124.

Allegorical and philosophical interpretations of Virgil's epic usually emphasized the hero's descent to the underworld, and therefore trailed off after Book 6. Wisdom was viewed as the telos of the epic journey, and eros was treated as an obstacle. Dante was well versed in the allegorical tradition, but in dealing with the second half of Virgil's epic, he seems to have been influenced by a second tradition, the courtly tradition of vernacular adaptation. Modern readings, both of Dante and of Virgil, have stressed the tragic elements in Virgil's poem, and have focused on the death of Turnus. In the courtly tradition, comic elements in the story come to the fore and the emphasis shifts from Turnus to the courtship of Aeneas and Lavinia. The result was a new conception of Virgil's epic, in which eros does not require eradication, but is susceptible of reformation and rectification. [DSW-O]

Witt, Ronald G. "The *De Tyranno* and Coluccio Salutati's View of Politics and Roman History." Essay VI in his *Italian Humanism and Medieval Rhetoric* (Aldershot, Hampshire, and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, Variorum, 2001).

The article, which treats in part the influence on Salutati of Dante's condemnation of Brutus and Cassius for the assassination of Julius Caesar (*Inf.* 34), was first published in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, 53 (1969), 434–474.

Wright, Charles. "Dantino Mio." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 259–264.

Yeats, William Butler. "From *A Vision*." In *The Poets' Dante* (q.v.), pp. 12–15.

Reviews

Alighieri, Dante. *Dante's "Monarchia."* Translated by Richard Kay. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1998. (See *Dante Studies* 117 [1999], 246.) Reviewed by:

John A. Scott, in *Speculum* 76, No. 2 (April, 2001), 427–430.

Alighieri, Dante. *Inferno*. Translated by Robert and Jean Hollander. Introduction and notes by Robert Hollander. New York: Doubleday, 2000. (See *Dante Studies* 119 [2001], 219.) Reviewed by:

Tim Parks, in *The New Yorker* (January 15, 2001), 84–89.

Barański, Zygmunt G. *'Chiosar con altro testo': leggere Dante nel Trecento*. Fiesole: Cadmo, 2001. Reviewed by:

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Barański, Zygmunt G. *Dante e i segni. Saggi per una storia intellettuale di Dante Alighieri*. Napoli: Liguori, 2000. Reviewed by:

Olivia Holmes, in *Rivista di Studi Italiani* 19, No. 1 (giugno, 2001), 285–289.

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Bruno Ferraro, in *Annali d'Italianistica* 19 (2001), 352–354;

Olivia Holmes, in *Rivista di Studi Italiani* 19, No. 1 (giugno, 2001), 285–289;

Richard Kay, in *The Medieval Review*, ID: 01.11.04 (<http://www.hti.umich.edu/t/tmr/>);

Mary A. Watt, in *Quaderni d'italianistica* 20, Nos. 1–2 (1999), 279–282.

Cherchi, Paolo. *L'alambicco in biblioteca: distillati rari*. Edited by Francesco Guardiani and Emilio Speciale. Ravenna: Longo, 2000. (See *Dante Studies* 119 [2001], 226.) Reviewed by:

Gustavo Costa, in *Annali d'Italianistica* 19 (2001), 333–335;

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Steven Botterill, in *Speculum* 76, No. 4 (October, 2001), 1012–1013;

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Cornish, Alison. *Reading Dante's Stars*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000. (See *Dante Studies* 119 [2001], 227.) Reviewed by:

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Shapiro, Marianne. *Dante and the Knot of Body and Soul*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. (See *Dante Studies*, 117 [1999], 269–270.) Reviewed by:

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Witt, Ronald G. *'In the Footsteps of the Ancients': The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*. Leiden: Brill, 2000. (See below under *Addenda: Studies*.) Reviewed by:

Mark Jurdjevic, in *Sixteenth Century Journal* 32, No. 2 (Summer, 2001), 467–469;

William McCuaig, in *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), 928–929.

ADDENDA

Translations

Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy: Selected Cantos = La Divina Commedia: Canti Scelti: A Dual Language Book*. Edited and translated by Stanley Appelbaum. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2000. xiv, 291 p.

Includes the complete text of thirty-three cantos (thirteen from *Inferno* [1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 17, 21, 24, 26, 30, 33, 34] and ten each from the other two canticles [*Purg.*: 1, 6, 7, 9, 11, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30; *Par.*: 3, 10, 11, 17, 23, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33]) in Italian with English translation on the facing page with brief summaries of the omitted cantos in their proper place to ensure narrative continuity, as well as an introduction that presents a concise introduction to Dante's life, times, and works. *Contents*: Introduction (v–xiv); *Inferno*/Hell (2–113); *Purgatorio*/Purgatory (114–203); *Paradiso*/Paradise (204–291).

Studies

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ture France.” In *The Stanford University Museum of Art Journal* 1 (1998–1999), 33–46.

Examines the works of Aubé and Rodin within the more general reception and appreciation of Dante by the French in the nineteenth century.

Bemrose, Stephen. *A New Life of Dante*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000 (available in North America through Northwestern University Press). xxi, 249 p.

The volume “weaves into a single narrative thread the whole of Dante’s life and works. Beginning with his early activity as a lyric poet and this political career in Florence, it then moves to the power struggles leading to his exile in 1302. It goes on to cover his increasingly isolated wanderings ending with his final years in Verona and Ravenna. Dante is an intensely philosophical writer as well as a socio-political one, and these intimately connected aspects are kept constantly in view in the extensive discussion of his writings. As well as his masterpiece the *Divina Commedia*, other works are also given considerable attention, particularly the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, the *Convivio*, the *Monarchia* and the political letters. The aim is to make an account of Dante’s life accessible to students and to the non-specialist reader.” *Contents*: Preface (xi–xii); A List of Dante’s Works and the Editions Used in this Book (xiii–xiv); A Guide to Further Reading in English (xv–xviii); Guelph and Ghibelline, Prefatory Note (xix–xxi); 1. A Florentine Childhood (1265–1283) (1–5); 2. Beatrice and the *Vita Nuova* (1283–1295) (6–20); 3. The Consolation of Philosophy (1290–1296) (21–36); 4. Guilds and Government: Dante the Politician (1295–1300) (37–50); 5. Boniface VIII and the Black Coup (1300–1302) (51–63); 6. Early Exile (1302–1304) (64–83); 7. A One-Man Party (1304–1308) (84–112); 8. The Sacred Poem: A Survey of the *Divine Comedy* (1308–1321) (113–172); 9. Henry VII and Dante’s Imperial Dream (1308–1313) (173–188); 10. The Gentleman of Verona (1312–1318) (189–206); 11. Ravenna (1318–1321) (207–220); Conclusion (221–222); Notes (223–233); Bibliography (234–240); Index (241–249).

Block, Haskell M. “Theory of Comedy from Dante to Joyce.” In *Comparative Literary Dimensions: Essays in Honor of Melvin J. Friedman*, edited by Jay L. Halio and Ben Siegel (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 2000), pp. 19–30.

Considers the general question of the definition of “comedy” over the centuries with numerous references to Dante.

Carugati, Giuliana. “Dante, il ‘breve uso’ dell’amore.” In *Quaderni d’italianistica* 21, No. 2 (2000), 93–112.

Argues that carnal love figures as the imperceptible, precarious point of contact with the divine. It is the momentary stepping into the absence of rationality, the passage from history to the “u-topia” of an original paradisiacal dimension. The aporia between carnal love and reason finds resolution in the written word in Dante, as the confluence of two otherwise conflicting agents: love dictates and reason writes. In *Inferno* 5, the love of Paolo and Francesca bears witness to the irreconcilable relation of eros, on one side, and history, law, and reason, on the other. The Earthly Paradise at the end of *Purgatorio* proves that carnal love alone allows human beings to transcend history and rationality and become one with the divine. The Earthly Paradise is the ideal locus, or rather a non-place, in which humans exit history to be rejoined with the divine, where reason and the babelic confusion of languages no longer exist. [AV]

Cornish, Alison. “A Lady Asks: The Gender of Vulgarization in Late Medieval Italy.” In *PMLA* 115, No. 2 (March, 2000), 166–180.

This essay explores the fascinating interactions among gender, power, and language in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian vernacularizations. Vernacularization lies at the heart of Italian writing in this period, from prose versions of classical literature and rhetoric to the translation of Aristotelian science implicit in the love lyric. The vernacular (or mother tongue) was commonly gendered female over and against patriarchal Latin, and the stated pretext for vernacular composition was often accessibility for female readers (even though “unlettered” male readers were also increasingly in need of translations). Cornish probes these commonplaces to show how some texts complicate them, in particular Guido Cavalcanti’s learned lyric disquisition on the nature of love, “Donna me prega” (“A Lady Asks”). Infamously arcane, “Donna me prega” resists the notion that vernacularization was always divulgative; Cavalcanti’s poem prompted the physician Dino del Garbo to write an explanatory commentary—in Latin!—, which was itself subsequently vernacularized. Ostensibly written in response to a query poem by Guido Orlandi, “Donna me prega” invents a female interlocutor, Aristotelian efficient cause of Cavalcanti’s lyric reasoning. Cornish considers the historical possibility of

such a learned lady and feels that her presence signals the poem's participation in the lyric genre. (Cornish notes a similarly intriguing gender collaboration in a vernacular text from the following century, Francesco da Barberino's didactic *Reggimento e costumi di donna*.) Ultimately, this essay shows how gender complicated the already anxiety-ridden project of vernacularization by feminizing the discourse of Latin learning, ennobling the vernacular and those who used it, and thus posing a potential threat to learned, Latin, male privilege. [GPC]

Fitzsimmons, Lorna. "The Socially 'Forsaken Race': Dantean Turns in Ann Petry's *The Street*." In *Notes on Contemporary Literature* 30, No. 2 (March, 2000), 6–8.

The author explores the use by Petry of Dantean tropes in order "to suggest that discrimination and prejudice in U.S. society reduce African Americans to the 'forsaken race' of the doomed in *The Inferno*" (6). Overall, Fitzsimmons proposes that the futile attempts by the novel's African American characters to pursue their dreams in a racist society represent a suggestive parallel to the equally hopeless events concerning the damned in Dante's Hell. [JLu]

Moevs, Christian. "Pyramus at the Mulberry Tree: De-petrifying Dante's Tinted Mind." In *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, edited by Jan Swango Emerson and Hugh Feiss, O.S.B. (New York: Garland, 2000), pp. 211–244.

"Dante refers directly to the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe twice in the *Commedia*, once in *Purgatorio* 27, as the pilgrim is about to enter the garden of earthly paradise to meet Beatrice, and once in *Purgatorio* 33, when Beatrice rebukes the pilgrim in the garden for the past moral failings which prevent him from understanding her. The references bracket Dante's reunion with his long-lost Beatrice, and frame his recovery of Eden, lost innocence, and eternal life." Argues that "these telegraphic references to Pyramus signal the failure of love or understanding through which Eden is lost, and thus point to the Christic revelation through which Eden, and beatitude, is recovered. In its simplest form, the revelation is that the kingdom of heaven lies within; to seek any good as other is already to have lost it. A good can therefore be lost only by a failure to know oneself; it can be regained only by sacrificing false self-conceptions."

Pinti, Daniel. "A Comedy of the *Monk's Tale*: Chaucer's Hugelyn and Early Commentary on Dante's Ugolino." In *Comparative Literature Studies* 37, No. 3 (2000), 277–297.

The author begins by remarking that the eight learned commentaries on the *Commedia* produced in roughly the first two decades after Dante's death suggest that "Dante's Italian audiences in the Trecento thought that the *Comedy* needed to be explained if it were to be fully understood" (277). The argument challenges a longstanding scholarly view that "Chaucer read Dante in an unmediated way" and proposes instead that Chaucer most likely encountered this commentary tradition in approaching Dante's poetry. Pinti focuses on the relationship between Chaucer's most celebrated appropriation of Dante, the Hugelyn narrative in the *Monk's Tale*, in its relation to the early commentaries on the Ugolino episode of *Inferno* 33. Overall, the author aims to show that "we can better understand how Chaucer read Dante by looking at how other learned readers read Dante in the fourteenth century" (278). [JLu]

Psaki, F. Regina. "The Sexual Body in Dante's Celestial Paradise." In *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, edited by Jan Swango Emerson and Hugh Feiss, O.S.B. (New York: Garland, 2000), pp. 47–61.

Argues that in the *Paradiso* "Dante tries, through very specific lexical and poetic choices, to adumbrate an eroticized relationship that is simply not congruent with earthly dichotomies of soul and body, *caritas* and *eros*, pure and impure. Dante's heaven contains unquestionable erotic freight, and reconciles the contradictory yet coexistent verities of both Christian doctrine and his own historically specific love for and with Beatrice." [FRP]

Terkla, Daniel P. "Impassioned Failure: Memory, Metaphor, and the Drive toward Intellection." In *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, edited by Jan Swango Emerson and Hugh Feiss, O.S.B. (New York: Garland, 2000), pp. 245–316.

The essay is concerned with Abbot Suger's basilica of St.-Denis, Richard of Haldingham's Hereford *Mappa Mundi*, and Dante's *Commedia*, which are seen both as "metaphoric paradigms of medieval Christian art, monuments to the desire to re-create Creation and to image the Imageless" and as "paradigmatic failures." Terkla suggests that "Richard's, Suger's, and Dante's use of accommodative and anagogical metaphor to

overcome the unavoidable reiterative failure that results when an artist attempts to depict the ineffable, regardless of medium: architecture, map-making, or poetry. At base, each man desired to move his virtual pilgrim from the material to the immaterial, to transfer him or her figuratively from this world to the next—or at least to provide an inkling of divine intellection, that ‘direct cognition of realities such as God, the angels, *caritas*, etc., which have neither corporeal substance nor corporeal shape.’ Put another way, Richard, Suger, and Dante created metaphorical structures—the map, the basilica, the poem—they hoped would act as vehicles that would affect this mystical *translatio*.” One section of this essay (“Dante’s *Commedia*: From Memory to Intellection,” 278–288) is devoted to Dante.

Witt, Ronald G. “*In the Footsteps of the Ancients*”: *The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*. Leiden: Brill, 2000. xiii, 562 p. (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, 74)

Contains numerous references to Dante, particularly in the chapter on “Florence and Vernacular Learning” (174–229).

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All submissions, both undergraduate and graduate, must be made by e-mail attachment of a file in either Word or WordPerfect and sent to the Dante Society at dsa@dantesociety.org. Files should have the extension .doc or .rtf if saved in Word, .wpd if saved in WordPerfect. No hardcopy submissions will be accepted. Undergraduate essays should be no longer than 5,000 words in length, graduate essays no longer than 7,000 words in length, including bibliographies and any other material. The deadline for submission is June 30 of each year.

Each writer should provide a cover page (as the first page of the file) giving the writer's name, local, permanent and e-mail addresses, the title of the essay, the essay category, and the writer's institutional affiliation. The writer's name should not appear on the essay title page (to follow the cover page) or on any other page of the essay since the essays are submitted anonymously to the readers. Quotations from Dante's works should be cited in the original language, and the format of an essay should conform to either the Chicago or MLA Style Sheet guidelines.

Submissions will be judged by a special Committee of the Society. If it should be decided that no one of the essays submitted deserves the full prize, the Society may award the prize to two contestants, each receiving one half of the prize, or it may make no award. Those who have submitted essays will be informed of the results of the competition in early fall. The results will be announced in the fall issue of the Society's *Newsletter* and in the annual issue of *Dante Studies*. While the essays remain the intellectual property of the writers, the submitted text will be not returned to authors.

Report of the Secretary

The 120th annual meeting of the Dante Society (and the 47th of the incorporated Dante Society of America) was held in the Eliot House on the Harvard University campus, on Saturday, 12 May 2002. **Teodolinda Barolini** called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. After the business meeting, **Rachel Jacoff** introduced contemporary poets **Rosanna Warren** and **Louise Glück**, who spoke on classical Variations from Two Contemporary Poets, and read from their recent work.

The balloting in the spring of 2002 saw the election **David Wallace** was elected to the Council for a term of three years, and **Richard Lansing** was re-elected Secretary-Treasurer for a term of one year. During the summer, **John Ahern** was elected Vice President for the year 2002–2003.

The Dante Prize for the best undergraduate essay for 2002 went to **Marisa Escobar** (Columbia University). The winner of the 2002 Grandgent Prize was **Patrick Gardner** (University of Notre Dame). **Regina Psaki** (chair) and **Christian Moevs** served as Prize Committee readers. The Council For the coming year several changes were

The Dante Society met in conjunction with the MLA Convention in New Orleans, on Sunday, December 28, 2002. **Teodolinda Barolini** introduced **Giuseppe Mazzotta** (Yale University), who spoke on the topic “The Spectacle and Geometry of Justice: *Paradiso* XVIII–XX.”

The Society sponsored three sessions on Dante at the Thirty-Seventh International Congress on Medieval Studies, held at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2–5, 2002:

Dante I: Problems in the *Divine Comedy*, organized by **Christopher Kleinhenz**, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and chaired by **Todd Boli**, Independent Scholar: **Phillip F. O’Mara**, Bridgewater College: “Pier delle Vigne and Other Obdurate, Ignorant Sinners”; **Alessandro Vettori**, Rutgers University: “Purgatory: Dante’s Prayerful Kingdom”; **V. Stanley Benfell**, Brigham Young University: “Faith and Sight in Dante’s *Paradiso*.”

Dante II: Parallels, Sources and Influence, organized by **Todd Boli**, Independent Scholar, and chaired by **Laurie Shepard**, Boston College: **Sharon Naveh**, Pennsylvania State University and Hofstra University: “Hebrew Parallels to Dante’s *Divine Comedy*: A Comparative Study”; **Todd Boli**, Independent Scholar: “Boccaccio’s Sources for the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*”; **Kathleen Verduin**, Hope College: “Dante in Ravenna: The Unfinished Novel of Dorothy L. Sayers.”

Dante III: Dante and the Romantics, organized by **Nicholas R. Havely**, University of York, and chaired by **V. Stanley Benfell**, Brigham Young University: **Cosetta Gaudenzi**, Gettysburg College: “The Little Gothic Novel of Francesca: English Rewritings of *Inferno V*”; **Antonella Braida**, University of Durham, England: “Blake and Republican Art: A Study of His Approach to Dante”; **Nicholas R. Havely**, University of York: “‘A Poem Now Writing’: Mary Shelley’s Dante and Italian History.”

